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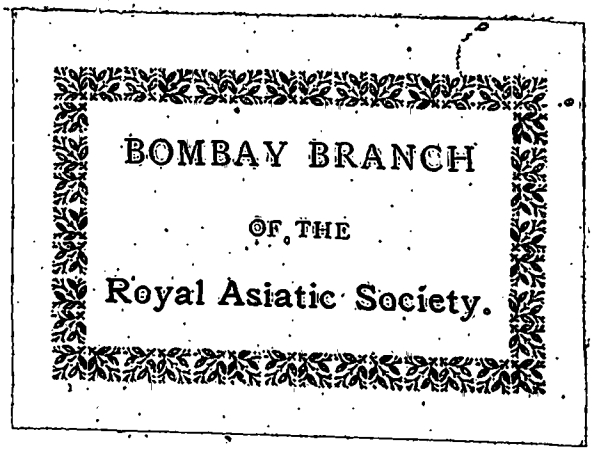

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PREFACE.

PUBLIC opinion has been so unanimous in its commendation of these Letters, that a critical examination of them on this occasion must be superfluous. Whatever difference may exist as to the literary rank of Horace Walpole, his distinguished talent as a letter-writer has not been questioned; and indeed all the excellencies that letters can pretend to, his birth, rank, situation, and peculiar talent, well enabled him to impress on them. He delighted in anecdote, and this correspondence approaches as nearly to his favourite Grammont, as letters and memoirs can be expected to assimilate; and "the son of old sir Robert" had this advantage, that he came prepared, not with the bare historical knowledge of the preceding age, which must usually satisfy others, but with a minute and private history, both of

men and things, that made it almost equally familiar to him with his own times. This was the knowledge Walpole himself delighted in, and this is the great and unrivalled excellence of his correspondence. To the few that yet linger among us, and remember the beauties he has celebrated, or have laughed at Arthur's with Townsend or Selwyn, these volumes will recall a thousand pleasant recollections; and to the present generation, it cannot but be gratifying to have the wit, the pleasantry, and the manners of an age, not indeed so long removed from us in time as in manners and opinions themselves, sketched with such admirable truth and spirit. The scenes between Selwyn and Mrs. Dorcas,—the marriage of "handsome Tracy,"—the Vauxhall party—and innumerable others, are the remembrances of an age that has quite passed away.

Though from earliest life, by birth, by education, and on principle, sincerely and zealously attached to the Whigs, with a name of authority among them, and a character beyond suspicion of good will and

single-mindedness, Horace Walpole was never conspicuous in the proceedings of that party. The truth is, Walpole was never any thing seriously. He had no private or selfish motive to fix, to interest, or to spirit him on; and parties are always too much in earnest to suit with his gentlemanly indifference. Yet Walpole was by no means an inattentive observer: he certainly neither liked politics nor writing dissertations; but a strong feeling is not unfrequently discoverable in a jest, and solid reflection in a hasty paragraph; and the reader cannot fail to observe how justly and prophetically he predicted consequences, many of which he did not live to see fulfilled.

It was the same in poetry, in history, in antiquity. He had a more than ordinary knowledge of, and might have excelled in any of them, but he wanted the enthusiasm that might have confined him exclusively to either; and though he loved fame, his aristocracy feared to be remembered as a poet, an historian, or an antiquary, and not as the Hon. Horace Walpole, who had written on those subjects.

In the estimate that has been made of the moral worth of Walpole, in the literary works of the day, there has been too much of supercilious trifling. He had certainly great failings; but his pure, zealous, and watchful regard of his father's memory, and his constant, unshaken, and disinterested attachment to general Conway, are redeeming virtues that ought never to be forgotten: —they were not evidenced in acts of momentary passion, but from the first to the last hour of a life protracted beyond ordinary limits. But we must not wonder that literary men speak slightingly of Walpole; they but echo back the opinion he had previously expressed of them. Walpole was probably the more correct in his estimate, but it is impolitic to irritate men to whom we must eventually refer for character, if we hope or deserve to have one; and Walpole was not indifferent to fame, though he affected to laugh at it.

This collection includes the whole of his letters hitherto published, and comprises a period of above sixty years, that is, from 1735 to 1797. They have been arranged

according to dates, by which the interest and connexion of events is uninterrupted; and, it is hoped, the Prefatory Index, in which the most striking subject of each letter is briefly noticed, will facilitate the reader's references; although nothing like a perfect Index could be attempted, where so many subjects are compressed into a single letter, and the most trifling anecdote becomes important from the admirable manner in which it is told.

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CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

King's College, Nov. 9, 1735.

Dear West,[1]

You expect a long letter from me, and have said in verse all that I intended to have said in far inferior prose. I intended filling three or four sides with exclamations against an university life, but you have showed me how strongly they may be expressed in three or four lines. I can't build

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[1] Richard West was the only son of the right honourable Richard West, lord chancellor of Ireland, by Elizabeth, daughter of the celebrated Dr. Burnet bishop of Salisbury.—This note is by the editor of the quarto edition of lord Orford's Works, and I wish here to observe that, with very trifling alteration, the notes to all the published letters have been retained. After this acknowledgment, it must be useless to particularise them.

without straw; nor have I the ingenuity of the spider, to spin fine lines out of dirt: a master of a college would make but a miserable figure as a hero of a poem, and Cambridge sophs are too low to introduce into a letter that aims not at punning:

> Haud equidem invideo vati, quem pulpita pascunt.

But why mayn't we hold a classical correspondence? I can never forget the many agreeable hours we have passed in reading Horace and Virgil; and I think they are topics will never grow stale. Let us extend the Roman empire, and cultivate two barbarous towns o'er-run with rusticity and mathematics. The creatures are so used to a circle, that they plod on in the same eternal round, with their whole view confined to a punctum, *cujus nulla est pars*:

> Their time a moment, and a point their space.

> Orabunt causas melius, cœlique meatus
> Describent radio, et surgentia sidera dicent:
> Tu coluisse novem Musas, Romane, memento;
> Hæ tibi erunt artes.....

We have not the least poetry stirring here; for I can't call verses on the 5th of November and 30th of January by that name, more than four lines on a chapter in the New Testament is an

epigram. Tydeus[1] rose and set at Eton: he is only known here to be a scholar of King's. Orosmades and Almanzor are just the same; that is, I am almost the only person they are acquainted with, and consequently the only person acquainted with their excellencies. Plato improves every day: so does my friendship with him. These three divide my whole time—though I believe you will guess there is no quadruple alliance:[2] that was a happiness which I only enjoyed when you was at Eton. A short account of the Eton people at Oxford would much oblige,

My dear West,

Your faithful friend.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.[3]

King's College, May 2, 1736.

Dear Sir,

Unless I were to be married myself, I should despair ever being able to describe a wedding so

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1 Tydeus, Orosmades, Almanzor, and Plato, were names which had been given by them to some of their Eton schoolfellows.

2 Thus as boys they had called the intimacy formed at Eton between Walpole, Gray, West, and Asheton.

3 George Montagu was the son of Brigadier-General Edward Montagu, and nephew to the second earl of Halifax. He was member of parliament for Northampton, usher of the black rod

well as you have done: had I known your talent before, I would have desired an epithalamium. I believe the princess[4] will have more beauties bestowed on her by the occasional poets, than even a painter would afford her. They will cook up a new Pandora, and in the bottom of the box enclose Hope, that all they have said is true. A great many, out of excess of good breeding, having heard it was rude to talk Latin before women, propose complimenting her in English; which she will be much the better for. I doubt most of them, instead of fearing their compositions should not be understood, should fear they should: they write they don't know what, to be read by they don't know who. You have made me a very unreasonable request, which I will answer with another as extraordinary: you desire I would burn your letters; I desire you would keep mine. I know but of one way of making what I send you useful, which is, by sending you a blank sheet: sure you would not grudge threepence for a half-penny sheet, when you give as much for one not worth a farthing. You drew this last paragraph on you by your exordium, as

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in Ireland, during the lieutenancy of the earl of Halifax, ranger of Salsey Forest, and private secretary to lord North when chancellor of the exchequer.

[4] Augusta, princess of Saxe-Gotha, married in April, 1736, to Frederick Lewis, prince of Wales.

you call it, and conclusion; I hope for the future our correspondence will run a little more glibly, with dear George, and dear Harry; not as formally as if we were playing a game at chess in Spain and Portugal; and Don Horatio was to have the honour of specifying to Don Georgio by an epistle, whither he would move. In one point I would have our correspondence like a game at chess; it should last all our lives—but I hear you cry check; adieu!

Dear George, yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

King's College, May 6, 1736.

DEAR GEORGE,

I AGREE with you entirely in the pleasure you take in talking over old stories, but can't say but I meet every day with new circumstances, which will be still more pleasure to me to recollect. I think at our age 'tis excess of joy, to think, while we are running over past happinesses, that it is still in our power to enjoy as great. Narrations of the greatest actions of other people are tedious in comparison of the serious trifles, that every man can call to mind of himself, while he was learning those histories. Youthful passages of life are the chippings of Pitt's diamond set into little heart-rings with mottos; the stone itself more worth,

the filings more gentle and agreeable.—Alexander, at the head of the world, never tasted the true pleasure, that boys of his own age have enjoyed at the head of a school. Little intrigues, little schemes, and policies, engage their thoughts; and at the same time that they are laying the foundation for their middle age of life, the mimic republic they live in, furnishes materials of conversation for their latter age; and old men cannot be said to be children a second time with greater truth from any one cause, than their living over again their childhood in imagination. To reflect on the season when first they felt the titillation of love, the budding passions, and the first dear object of their wishes! how unexperienced they gave credit to all the tales of romantic loves! Dear George, were not the playing fields at Eton food for all manner of flights? no old maid's gown, though it had been tormented into all the fashions from king James to king George, ever underwent so many transformations, as those poor plains have in my idea. At first I was contented with tending a visionary flock, and sighing some pastoral name to the echo of the cascade under the bridge. How happy should I have been to have had a kingdom only for the pleasure of being driven from it, and living disguised in an humble vale. As I got further into Virgil and Clelia, I found myself transported from Arcadia to the garden of Italy; and saw Windsor Castle in no

other view than the *Capitoli immobile saxum.* I wish a committee of the House of Commons may ever seem to be the senate; or a bill appear half so agreeable as a billet-doux. You see how deep you have carried me into old stories; I write of them with pleasure, but shall talk of them with more to you. I can't say I am sorry I was never quite a school boy; an expedition against bargemen, or a match at cricket, may be very pretty things to recollect; but, thank my stars, I can remember things that are very near as pretty. The beginning of my Roman history was spent in the asylum, or conversing in Egeria's hallowed grove; not in thumping and pummelling king Amulius's herdsmen. I was sometimes troubled with a rough creature or two from the plough; one, that one should have thought, had worked with his head, as well as his hands, they were both so callous. One of the most agreeable circumstances I can recollect is the Triumvirate, composed of yourself, Charles,[1] and

Your sincere friend.

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1 Colonel Charles Montagu, afterwards lieutenant-general, and knight of the bath, and brother of George Montagu. He married Elizabeth Villiers, viscountess Grandison, daughter of the earl of Grandison.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

King's College, May 20, 1736.

DEAR GEORGE,

You will excuse my not having written to you, when you hear I have been a jaunt to Oxford. As you have seen it, I shall only say I think it one of the most agreeable places I ever set my eyes on. In our way thither we stopped at the duke of Kent's[1] at Wrest.[2] On the great staircase is a picture of the dutchess;[3] I said it was very like; oh, dear sir! said Mrs. House-keeper, it's too handsome for my lady dutchess; her grace's chin is much longer than that.

In the garden are monuments in memory of lord Harold,[4] lady Glenorchy,[5] the late dutchess,[6] and the present duke. At lord Clarendon's,[7] at Combury,[8] is a prodigious quantity of Vandykes;

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1 Henry de Grey, duke, marquis and earl of Kent, son of Anthony earl of Kent, and Mary daughter of lord Lucas.

2 Wrest House in Bedfordshire.

3 Lady Sophia Bentinck, second wife of the duke of Kent, and daughter to William earl of Portland.

4 Anthony earl of Harold, eldest son of the duke of Kent.

5 Annabella, eldest daughter of the duke of Kent, married to John Campbel, lord viscount Glenorchy, son of lord Brodalbin.

6 Jemima, eldest daughter of lord Crewe, and first wife of the duke of Kent.

7 Henry, earl of Clarendon and Rochester, son of Laurence, earl of Rochester.

8 In the county of Oxford.

but I had not time to take down any of their dresses. By the way, you gave me no account of the last masquerade. Coming back, we saw Eeston Neston, a seat of lord Pomfret, where in an old green-house is a wonderful fine statue of Tully, haranguing a numerous assembly of decayed emperors, vestal virgins with new noses, Colossus's, Venus's, headless carcases, and carcaseless heads, pieces of tombs, and hieroglyphics. I saw Althrop[9] the same day, where are a vast many pictures—some mighty good; a gallery with the Windsor beauties, and lady Bridgewater, who is full as handsome as any of them; a bouncing head of, I believe, Cleopatra, called there the dutchess of Mazarine. The park is enchanting. I forgot to tell you I was at Blenheim, where I saw nothing but a cross house-keeper, and an impertinent porter, except a few pictures; a quarry of stone that looked at a distance like a great house, and about this quarry, quantities of inscriptions in honour of the duke of Marlborough, and I think of her grace too.

Adieu! dear George,

Yours ever.

[*The verses are not yet published.*]

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[9] The seat of the earl of Sunderland.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

King's College, May 30, 1736.

DEAR GEORGE,

You shew me in the prettiest manner how much you like Petronius Arbiter; I have heard you commend him, but I am more pleased with your tacit approbation of writing like him, prose interspersed with verse: I shall send you soon in return some poetry interspersed with prose; I mean the Cambridge congratulation with the notes, as you desired. I have transcribed the greatest part of what was tolerable at the coffee-houses; but by most of what you will find, you will hardly think I have left any thing worse behind. There is lately come out a new piece, called a dialogue between Philemon and Hydaspes on false religion, by one Mr. Coventry, A. M. and fellow, formerly fellow commoner of Magdalen. He is a young man, but 'tis really a pretty thing. If you cannot get it in town, I will send it with the verses. He accounts for superstition in a new manner, and I think a just one; attributing it to disappointments in love. He don't resolve it all into that bottom; ascribes it almost wholly as the source of female enthusiasm; and I dare say there's ne'er a girl from the age of fourteen to four-and-twenty, but will subscribe to his principles, and own, if the dear man were dead that she loves, she would

settle all her affection on heaven, whither he was gone.

Who would not be an Artemisia, and raise the stately mausoleum to her lord; then weep and watch incessant over it like the Ephesian matron!

I have heard of one lady, who had not quite so great a veneration for her husband's tomb, but preferred lying alone in one, to lying on his left hand; perhaps she had an aversion to the German custom of left-handed wives. I met yesterday with a pretty little dialogue on the subject of constancy; 'tis between a traveller and a dove.

LE PASSANT.

Que fais tu dans ce bois, plaintive Tourturelle?

LA TOURTURELLE.

Je gemis, j'ai perdu ma compagne fidelle.

LE PASSANT.

Ne crains tu pas que l'oiseleur
Ne te fasse mourir comme elle?

LA TOURTURELLE.

Si ce n'est lui, ce sera ma douleur.

'Twould have been a little more apposite, if she had grieved for her lover. I have ventured to turn it to that view, lengthened it, and spoiled it, as you shall see.

P.—Plaintive turtle, cease your moan;
Hence away;
In this dreary wood alone
Why d'ye stay?

T.—These tears, alas! you see flow
For my mate!

P.—Dread you not from net or bow
His sad fate?

T.—If, ah! if they neither kill,
Sorrow will.

You will excuse this gentle nothing, I mean mine, when I tell you, I translated it out of pure goodnature for the use of a disconsolate wood-pigeon in our grove, that was made a widow by the barbarity of a gun. She coos and calls me so movingly, 'twould touch your heart to hear her. I protest to you it grieves me to pity her. She is so allicholly as any thing. I'll warrant you now she's as sorry as one of us would be. Well, good man, he's gone, and he died like a lamb. She's an unfortunate woman, but she must have patience; 'tis what we must all come to, and so as I was saying,

Dear George, good bye t'ye,
Yours sincerely.

P. S. I don't know yet when I shall leave Cambridge.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

King's College, Aug. 17, 1736.

Dear West,

Gray is at Burnham, and, what is surprising, has not been at Eton. Could you live so near it without seeing it? That dear scene of our quadruple alliance would furnish me with the most agreeable recollections. 'Tis the head of our genealogical table, that is since sprouted out into the two branches of Oxford and Cambridge. You seem to be the eldest son, by having got a whole inheritance to yourself; while the manor of Granta is to be divided between your three younger brothers, Thomas of Lancashire,[1] Thomas of London,[2] and Horace. We don't wish you dead to enjoy your seat, but your seat dead to enjoy you. I hope you are a mere elder brother, and live upon what your father left you, and in the way you were brought up in, poetry: but we are supposed to betake ourselves to some trade, as logic, philosophy, or mathematics. If I should prove a mere younger brother, and not turn to any profession,

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[1] Thomas Asheton. He was afterwards fellow of Eton-college, rector of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate-street, and preacher to the Society of Lincoln's-inn. It is to him Mr. Walpole addressed a poetical epistle from Florence, first published in Dodsley's collection of poems.

[2] Thomas Gray, the poet.

would you receive me, and supply me out of your stock, where you have such plenty? I have been so used to the delicate food of Parnassus, that I can never condescend to apply to the grosser studies of alma mater. Sober cloth of syllogism colour suits me ill; or, what's worse, I hate clothes that one must prove to be of no colour at all. If the Muses *cœlique vias et sidera monstrent*, and *quâ vi maria alta tumescant;* why *accipiant:* but 'tis thrashing, to study philosophy in the abstruse authors. I am not against cultivating these studies, as they are certainly useful; but then they quite neglect all polite literature, all knowledge of this world. Indeed such people have not much occasion for this latter; for they shut themselves up from it, and study till they know less than any one. Great mathematicians have been of great use: but the generality of them are quite unconversible; they frequent the stars, *sub pedibusque vident nubes,* but they can't see through them. I tell you what I see: that by living amongst them, I write of nothing else; my letters are all parallelograms, two sides equal to two sides; and every paragraph an axiom, that tells you nothing but what every mortal almost knows. By the way, your letters come under this description; for they contain nothing but what almost every mortal knows too, that knows you—that is, they are extremely agreeable, which they know you are

capable of making them:—no one is better acquainted with it than

Your sincere friend.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

King's College, March 20, 1737.

DEAR GEORGE,

THE first paragraph in my letter must be in answer to the last in yours; though I should be glad to make you the return you ask, by waiting on you myself. 'Tis not in my power, from more circumstances than one, which are needless to tell you, to accompany you and lord Conway[1] to Italy: you add to the pleasure it would give me, by asking it so kindly. You I am infinitely obliged to, as I was capable, my dear George, of making you forget for a minute that you don't propose stirring from the dear place you are now in. Poppies indeed are the chief flowers in love nosegays, but they seldom bend towards the lady; at least not till the other flowers have been gathered. Prince Volscius's boots were made of love-leather, and honour-leather; instead of honour, some people's are made of friendship: but since you have been

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[1] Francis Seymour Conway, son of Francis Seymour, lord Conway, and Charlotte, daughter of John Shorter, esq.

so good to me as to draw on this, I can almost believe you are equipped for travelling farther than Rheims. 'Tis no little inducement to make me wish myself in France, that I hear gallantry is not left off there; that you may be polite, and not be thought awkward for it. You know the pretty men of the age in England use the women with no more deference than they do their coach-horses, and have not half the regard for them, that they have for themselves. The little freedoms, you tell me, you use, take off from formality, by avoiding which ridiculous extreme we are dwindled into the other barbarous one, rusticity. If you had been at Paris, I should have inquired about the new Spanish ambassadress, who, by the accounts we have thence, at her first audience of the queen, sat down with her at a distance, that suited respect and conversation.

Adieu, dear George,
Yours most heartily.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Christopher Inn, Eton.

The Christopher. Lord! how great I used to think any body just landed at the Christopher! But here are no boys for me to send for—here I am like Noah just returned into his old world again, with all sorts of queer feels about me. By

the way, the clock strikes the old cracked sound —I recollect so much, and remember so little— and want to play about—and am so afraid of my play-fellows—and am ready to shirk Asheton—and can't help *making fun* of myself—and envy a dame over the way that has just locked in her boarders, and is going to sit down in a little hot parlour to a very bad supper, so comfortably! and I could be so jolly a dog if I did not *fat*, which by the way is the first time the word was ever applicable to me. In short I should be out of all *bounds*, if I was to tell you half I feel, how young again I am one minute, and how old the next. But do come and feel with me when you will—to-morrow.—adieu! If I don't compose myself a little more before Sunday morning when Asheton is to preach, I shall certainly *be in a bill for laughing at church;* but how to help it, to see him in the pulpit, when the last time I saw him here, was standing up funking over against a conduit to be catechised.

Good night; yours.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Paris, April 21, N. S. 1739.

Dear West,

You figure us in a set of pleasures, which, believe me, we do not find[1]: cards and eating are so universal, that they absorb all variation of pleasures. The operas indeed are much frequented three times a week; but to me they would be a greater penance than eating maigre: their music resembles a gooseberry tart as much as it does harmony. We have not yet been at the Italian play-house; scarce any one goes there. Their best amusement, and which in some parts beats ours, is the comedy; three or four of the actors excel any we have: but then to this nobody goes, if it is not one of the fashionable nights, and then they go, be the play good or bad—except on Moliere's nights, whose pieces they are quite weary of. Gray and I have been at the Avare to-night: I cannot at all commend their performance of it. Last night I was in the place de Louis le grand (a regular octagon, uniform, and the houses handsome, though not so large as Golden-square), to see what they reckoned one of the finest buri-

[1] Mr. Walpole left Cambridge towards the end of the year 1738, and in March 1739 began his travels, by going to Paris, accompanied by Mr. Gray.

als that ever was in France. It was the duke de Tresmes, governor of Paris and marshal of France. It began on foot from his palace to his parish-church, and from thence in coaches to the opposite end of Paris, to be interred in the church of the Celestins, where is his family vault. About a week ago we happened to see the grave digging, as we went to see the church, which is old and small, but fuller of fine ancient monuments than any except St. Denis, which we saw on the road, and excels Westminster; for the windows are all painted in mosaic, and the tombs as fresh and well preserved as if they were of yesterday. In the Celestins' church is a votive column to Francis II. which says, that it is one assurance of his being immortalized, to have had the martyr Mary Stuart for his wife. After this long digression I return to the burial, which was a most vile thing. A long procession of flambeaux and friars; no plumes, trophies, banners, led horses, scutcheons, or open chariots; nothing but

> . . . . . friars,
> White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.

This goodly ceremony began at nine at night, and did not finish till three this morning; for, each church they passed, they stopped for a hymn and holy water. By the bye, some of these choice monks, who watched the body while it lay in state, fell asleep one night, and let the tapers

catch fire of the rich velvet mantle lined with ermine and powdered with gold flower-de-luces, which melted the lead coffin, and burnt off the feet of the deceased before it wakened them. The French love show; but there is a meanness reigns through it all. At the house where I stood to see this procession, the room was hung with crimson damask and gold, and the windows were mended in ten or a dozen places with paper. At dinner they give you three courses; but a third of the dishes is patched up with sallads, butter, puff-paste, or some such miscarriage of a dish. None, but Germans, wear fine clothes; but their coaches are tawdry enough for the wedding of Cupid and Psyche. You would laugh extremely at their signs: some live at the Y grec, some at Venus's toilette, and some at the sucking cat. You would not easily guess their notions of honour: I'll tell you one: it is very dishonourable for any gentleman not to be in the army, or in the king's service as they call it, and it is no dishonour to keep public gaming-houses: there are at least an hundred and fifty people of the first quality in Paris who live by it. You may go into their houses at all hours of the night, and find hazard, pharaoh, &c. The men who keep the hazard-table at the duke de Gesvres' pay him twelve guineas each night for the privilege. Even the princesses of the blood are dirty enough to have shares in the banks kept at their houses.

We have seen two or three of them; but they are not young, nor remarkable but for wearing their red of a deeper dye than other women, though all use it extravagantly.

The weather is still so bad, that we have not made any excursions to see Versailles and the environs, not even walked in the Thuilleries; but we have seen almost every thing else that is worth seeing in Paris, though that is very considerable. They beat us vastly in buildings, both in number and magnificence. The tombs of Richelieu and Mazarine at the Sorbonne and the College de Quatre Nations are wonderfully fine, especially the former. We have seen very little of the people themselves, who are not inclined to be propitious to strangers, especially if they do not play, and speak the language readily. There are many English here: lord Holderness, Conway and Clinton, and lord George Bentinck; Mr. Brand, Offley, Frederic, Frampton, Bonfoy, &c. Sir John Cotton's son and a Mr. Vernon of Cambridge passed through Paris last week. We shall stay here about a fortnight longer, and then go to Rheims with Mr. Conway for two or three months. When you have nothing else to do, we shall be glad to hear from you; and any news. If we did not remember there was such a place as England, we should know nothing of it: the French never mention it, unless it happens to be in one of their proverbs. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To-morrow we go to the Cid. They have no farces, but *petites pièces* like our Devil to Pay.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

From Paris, 1739.

DEAR WEST,

I SHOULD think myself to blame not to try to divert you, when you tell me I can. From the air of your letter you seem to want amusement, that is, you want spirits. I would recommend to you certain little employments that I know of, and that belong to you, but that I imagine bodily exercise is more suitable to your complaint. If you would promise me to read them in the Temple garden, I would send you a little packet of plays and pamphlets that we have made up, and intend to dispatch to Dick's the first opportunity. —Stand by, clear the way, make room for the pompous appearance of Versailles le grand!—— But no: it fell so short of my idea of it, mine, that I have resigned to Gray the office of writing its panegyric. He likes it. They say I am to like it better next Sunday; when the sun is to shine, the king is to be fine, the water-works are to play, and the new knights of the Holy Ghost are to be installed! Ever since Wednesday, the day we were there, we have done nothing but dispute about it. They say, we did not see it to advantage, that we ran through the apartments,

saw the garden *en passant*, and slubbered over Trianon. I say, we saw nothing. However, we had time to see that the great front is a lumber of littlenesses, composed of black brick, stuck full of bad old busts, and fringed with gold rails. The rooms are all small, except the great gallery, which is noble, but totally wainscoted with looking-glass. The garden is littered with statues and fountains, each of which has its tutelary deity. In particular, the elementary god of fire solaces himself in one. In another, Enceladus, in lieu of a mountain, is overwhelmed with many waters. There are avenues of water-pots, who disport themselves much in squirting up cascadelins. In short, tis a garden for a great child. Such was Louis quatorze, who is here seen in his proper colours, where he commanded in person, unassisted by his armies and generals, and left to the pursuit of his own puerile ideas of glory.

We saw last week a place of another kind, and which has more the air of what it would be, than any thing I have yet met with: it was the convent of the Chartreux. All the conveniences, or rather (if there was such a word) all the *adaptments* are assembled here, that melancholy, meditation, selfish devotion, and despair would require. But yet 'tis pleasing. Soften the terms, and mellow the uncouth horror that reigns here, but a little, and 'tis a charming solitude. It stands on a large space of ground, is old and irregular.

The chapel is gloomy: behind it, through some dark passages, you pass into a large obscure hall, which looks like a combination-chamber for some hellish council. The large cloister surrounds their burying-ground. The cloisters are very narrow, and very long, and let into the cells, which are built like little huts detached from each other. We were carried into one, where lived a middle-aged man not long initiated into the order. He was extremely civil, and called himself Dom Victor. We have promised to visit him often. Their habit is all white: but besides this, he was infinitely clean in his person; and his apartment and garden, which he keeps and cultivates without any assistance, was neat to a degree. He has four little rooms, furnished in the prettiest manner, and hung with good prints. One of them is a library, and another a gallery. He has several canary-birds disposed in a pretty manner in breeding-cages. In his garden was a bed of good tulips in bloom, flowers and fruit-trees, and all neatly kept. They are permitted at certain hours to talk to strangers, but never to one another, or to go out of their convent. But what we chiefly went to see was the small cloister, with the history of St. Bruno, their founder, painted by Le Sœur. It consists of twenty-two pictures, the figures a good deal less than life. But sure they are amazing! I don't know what Raphael may be in Rome, but these pictures excel all I

have seen in Paris and England. The figure of the dead man who spoke at his burial, contains all the strongest and horridest ideas, of ghastliness, hypocrisy discovered, and the height of damnation; pain and cursing. A Benedictine monk, who was there at the same time, said to me of this picture: *C'est une fable, mais on la croyoit autrefois.* Another, who showed me relics in one of their churches, expressed as much ridicule for them. The pictures I have been speaking of are ill preserved, and some of the finest heads defaced, which was done at first by a rival of Le Sœur's.——Adieu! dear West, take care of your health; and some time or other we will talk over all these things with more pleasure than I have had in seeing them.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Rheims[1], June 18, 1739, N. S.

Dear West,

How I am to fill up this letter is not easy to divine. I have consented that Gray shall give you

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[1] Mr. Walpole, with his cousin Henry Seymour Conway and Mr. Gray, resided three months at Rheims, principally to acquire the French language.

an account of our situation and proceedings; and have left myself at the mercy of my own invention—a most terrible resource, and which I shall avoid applying to, if I can possibly help it. I had prepared the ingredients for a description of a ball, and was just ready to serve it up to you, but he has plucked it from me. However, I was resolved to give you an account of a particular song and dance in it, and was determined to write the words and sing the tune just as I folded up my letter: but as it would, ten to one, be opened before it gets to you, I am forced to lay aside this thought, though an admirable one. Well, but now I have put it into your head, I suppose you won't rest without it. For that individual one, believe me, 'tis nothing without the tune and the dance; but to stay your stomach, I will send you one of their vaudevilles or ballads[1], which they sing at the comedy after their *petites pièces.*

You must not wonder if all my letters resemble dictionaries, with French on one side, and English on t'other; I deal in nothing else at present, and talk a couple of words of each language alternately from morning till night. This has put my mouth a little out of tune at present; but I am trying to recover the use of it, by reading the

[1] This ballad does not appear.

news-papers aloud at breakfast, and by chewing the title-pages of all my English books. Besides this, I have paraphrased half the first act of your new Gustavus, which was sent us to Paris: a most dainty performance, and just what you say of it. Good night, I am sure you must be tired: if you are not, I am.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Rheims, July 20, 1739.

Gray says, Indeed you ought to write to West. Lord, child, so I would, if I knew what to write about. If I were in London and he at Rheims, I would send him volumes about peace and war, Spaniards, camps and conventions; but d'ye think he cares sixpence to know who is gone to Compiegne, and when they come back, or who won and lost four livres at quadrille last night at Mr. Cockbert's?—No, but you may tell him what you have heard of Compiegne; that they have balls twice a week after the play, and that the count d'Eu gave the king a most flaring entertainment in the camp, where the Polygone was represented in flowering shrubs. Dear West, these are the things I must tell you; I don't know how to make 'em look significant, unless you will be a Rhe-

mois for a little moment[1]. I wonder you can stay out of the city so long, when we are going to have all manner of diversions. The comedians return hither from Compiegne in eight days, for example; and in a very little of time one attends the regiment of the king, three battalions, and an hundred of officers; all men of a certain fashion, very amiable, and who know their world. Our women grow more gay, more lively from day to day in expecting them; mademoiselle la Reine is brewing a wash of a finer dye, and brushing up her eyes for their arrival. La Barone already counts upon fifteen of them; and madame Lelu, finding her linen robe conceals too many beauties, has bespoke one of gauze.

I won't plague you any longer with people you don't know, I mean French ones; for you must absolutely hear of an Englishman that lately appeared at Rheims. About two days ago, about four o'clock in the afternoon, and about an hour after dinner; from all which you may conclude we dine at two o'clock — as we were picking our teeth round a littered table, and in a crumby room, Gray in an undress, Mr. Conway in a morning grey coat, and I in a trim white night-gown, and slippers, very much out of order, with a very little

[1] The three following paragraphs are a literal translation of French expressions to the same import.

cold—a message discomposed us all of a sudden, with a service to Mr. Walpole from Mr. More, and that, if he pleased, he would wait on him. We scuttle up stairs in great confusion, but with no other damage than the flinging down two or three glasses, and the dropping a slipper by the way. Having ordered the room to be cleaned out, and sent a very civil response to Mr. More, we began to consider who Mr. More should be. Is it Mr. More of Paris? No. Oh, 'tis Mr. More, my lady Tenham's husband? No, it can't be he. A Mr. More then that lives in the Halifax family? No. In short, after thinking of ten thousand more Mr. Mores, we concluded it could be never a one of 'em. By this time Mr. More arrives; but such a Mr. More! a young gentleman out of the wilds of Ireland, who has never been in England, but has got all the ordinary language of that kingdom; has been two years at Paris, where he dined at an ordinary with the refugee Irish, and learnt fortifications, which he does not understand at all, and which yet is the only thing he knows. In short, he is a young swain of very uncouth phrase, inarticulate speech, and no ideas. This hopeful child is riding post into Lorrain, or any where else, he is not certain; for if there is a war he shall go home again: for we must give the Spaniards another drubbing, you know; and if the Dutch do but join us, we shall blow up all the ports in Europe; for our ships are our bas-

tions, and our ravelines, and our hornworks; and there's a devilish wide ditch for 'em to pass, which they can't fill up with things——Here Mr. Conway helped him to fascines. By this time I imagine you have laughed at him as much, and were as tired of him as we were: but he's gone. This is the day that Gray and I intended for the first of a southern circuit; but as Mr. Selwyn and George Montagu design us a visit here, we have put off our journey for some weeks. When we get a little farther, I hope our memoires will brighten: at present they are but dull, dull as

Your humble servant ever.

P. S. I thank you ten thousand times for your last letter: when I have as much wit and as much poetry in me, I'll send you as good an one. Good night, child!

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

From a Hamlet among the Mountains of Savoy, Sept. 28, 1739, N. S.

Precipices, mountains, torrents, wolves, rumblings, Salvator Rosa——the pomp of our park and the meekness of our palace! Here we are, the lonely lords of glorious desolate prospects. I have kept a sort of resolution which I made, of not writing to you as long as I staid in France:

I am now a quarter of an hour out of it, and write to you. Mind, 'tis three months since we heard from you. I begin this letter among the clouds; where I shall finish, my neighbour heaven probably knows: 'tis an odd wish in a mortal letter, to hope not to finish it on this side the atmosphere. You will have a billet tumble to you from the stars when you least think of it; and that I should write it too! Lord, how potent that sounds! But I am to undergo many transmigrations before I come to "yours ever." Yesterday I was a shepherd of Dauphiné; to-day an Alpine savage; to-morrow a Carthusian monk; and Friday a Swiss Calvinist. I have one quality which I find remains with me in all worlds and in all æthers; I brought it with me from your world, and am admired for it in this; 'tis my esteem for you: this is a common thought among you, and you will laugh at it, but it is new here; as new to remember one's friends in the world one has left, as for you to remember those you have lost.

Aix in Savoy, Sept. 30th.

We are this minute come in here, and here's an awkward abbé this minute come into us. I asked him if he would sit down. *Oui, oui, oui.* He has ordered us a radish soup for supper, and has brought a chess-board to play with Mr. Conway. I have left 'em in the act, and am set down to write to you. Did you ever see any thing like

the prospect we saw yesterday? I never did. We rode three leagues to see the Grande Chartreuse; expected bad roads, and the finest convent in the kingdom. We were disappointed pro and con. The building is large and plain, and has nothing remarkable but its primitive simplicity: they entertained us in the neatest manner, with eggs, pickled salmon, dried fish, conserves, cheese, butter, grapes, and figs, and pressed us mightily to lie there. We tumbled into the hands of a lay-brother, who, unluckily having the charge of the meal and bran, showed us little besides. They desired us to set down our names in the list of strangers, where, among others, we found two mottos of our countrymen, for whose stupidity and brutality we blushed. The first was of sir J * * * D * * *, who had wrote down the first stanza of *Justum & tenacem*, altering the last line to *Mente quatit Carthusiana.* The second was of one D * *, *Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitiâ; & hìc ventri indico bellum.* The Goth!—But the road, West, the road! winding round a prodigious mountain, and surrounded with others, all shagged with hanging woods, obscured with pines or lost in clouds! Below, a torrent breaking through cliffs, and tumbling through fragments of rocks! Sheets of cascades forcing their silver speed down channelled precipices, and hasting into the roughened river at the bottom! Now and then an old foot-bridge, with a broken rail, a leaning cross, a

cottage, or the ruin of an hermitage! This sounds too bombast and too romantic to one that has not seen it, too cold for one that has. If I could send you my letter post between two lovely tempests that echoed each other's wrath, you might have some idea of this noble roaring scene, as you were reading it. Almost on the summit, upon a fine verdure, but without any prospect, stands the Chartreuse. We staid there two hours, rode back through this charming picture, wished for a painter, wished to be poets! Need I tell you we wished for you? Good night!

Geneva, Oct. 2.

By beginning a new date, I should begin a new letter; but I have seen nothing yet, and the post is going out: 'tis a strange tumbled dab, and dirty too, I am sending you; but what can I do? There is no possibility of writing such a long history over again. I find there are many English in the town; lord Brook, lord Mansel, lord Hervey's eldest son, and a son of——of Mars and Venus, or of Antony and Cleopatra, or in short, of ————. This is the boy in the bow of whose hat Mr. Hedges pinned a pretty epigram; I don't know if you ever heard it: I'll suppose you never did, because it will fill up my letter:

Give but Cupid's dart to me,
Another Cupid I shall be;

No more distinguish'd from the other.
Than Venus would be from my mother.

Scandal says, Hedges thought the two last very like; and it says too, that she was not his enemy for thinking so.

Adieu! Gray and I return to Lyons in three days. Harry[1] stays here. Perhaps at our return we may find a letter from you: it ought to be very full of excuses, for you have been a lazy creature; I hope you have, for I would not owe your silence to any other reason.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Turin, Nov. 11, 1739, N. S.

So, as the song says, we are in fair Italy! I wonder we are; for, on the very highest precipice of mount Cenis, the devil of discord in the similitude of sour wine had got amongst our Alpine savages, and set them a-fighting with Gray and me in the chairs: they rushed him by me on a crag where there was scarce room for a cloven foot. The least slip had tumbled us into such a fog, and such an eternity, as we should never have found

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[1] Mr. Conway.

our way out of again. We were eight days in coming hither from Lyons; the four last in crossing the Alps. Such uncouth rocks and such uncomely inhabitants! my dear West. I hope I shall never see them again! At the foot of mount Cenis we were obliged to quit our chaise, which was taken all to pieces and loaded on mules; and we were carried in low arm-chairs on poles, swathed in beaver bonnets, beaver gloves, beaver stockings, muffs, and bear-skins. When we came to the top, behold the snows fallen! and such quantities, and conducted by such heavy clouds that hung glouting, that I thought we could never have waded through them. The descent is two leagues, but steep, and rough as O * * * * father's face, over which, you know, the devil walked with hob-nails in his shoes. But the dexterity and nimbleness of the mountaineers is inconceivable; they run with you down steeps and frozen precipices, where no man, as men are now, could possibly walk. We had twelve men and nine mules to carry us, our servants and baggage, and were above five hours in this agreeable jaunt! The day before, I had a cruel accident, and so extraordinary an one, that it seems to touch upon the traveller. I had brought with me a little black spaniel, of king Charles's breed; but the prettiest, fattest, dearest creature! I had let it out of the chaise for the air, and it was waddling along close to the head of the horses, on the top

of the highest Alps, by the side of a wood of firs. There darted out a young wolf, seized poor dear Tory by the throat, and, before we could possibly prevent it, sprung up the side of the rock and carried him off. The postillion jumped off and struck at him with his whip, but in vain. I saw it and screamed, but in vain; for the road was so narrow, that the servants that were behind could not get by the chaise to shoot him. What is the extraordinary part is, that it was but two o'clock, and broad sun-shine. It was shocking to see any thing one loved run away with to so horrid a death.

Just coming out of Chamberri, which is a little nasty old hole, I copied an inscription, set up at the end of a great road, which was practised through an immense solid rock by bursting it asunder with gun-powder: the Latin is pretty enough, and so I send it you:

Carolus Emanuel II. Sab. dux, Pedem. princeps, Cypri rex, publicâ felicitate partâ, singulorum commodis intentus, breviorem securioremque viam regiam, naturâ occlusam, Romanis intentatam, cæteris desperatam; dejectis scopulorum repagulis, æquatâ montium iniquitate, quæ cervicibus imminebant precipitia pedibus substernens, æternis populorum commerciis patefecit. A. D. 1670.

We passed the Pas de Suze, where is a strong fortress on a rock, between two very neighbouring mountains; and then, through a fine avenue of three leagues, we at last discovered Turin.

E l'un à l'altro mostra, et in tanto oblia
La noia, e'l mal de la passata via.

'Tis really by far one of the prettiest cities I have seen—not one of your large straggling ones that can afford to have twenty dirty suburbs, but clean and compact, very new and very regular. The king's palace is not of the proudest without, but of the richest within; painted, gilt, looking-glassed, very costly, but very tawdry; in short, a very popular palace. We were last night at the Italian comedy—The devil of a house, and the devil of actors! Besides this, there is a sort of an heroic tragedy, called *La representatione dell' anima damnata.* A woman, a sinner, comes in and makes a solemn prayer to the Trinity: enter Jesus Christ and the Virgin: he scolds, and exit: she tells the woman her son is very angry, but she don't know, she will see what she can do. After the play, we were introduced to the assembly, which they call the Conversazione: there were many people playing at ombre, pharaoh, and a game called taroc, with cards so *high*[1], to the number of seventy-eight. There are three or four English here; lord Lincoln, with Spence, your professor of poetry; a Mr. B***, and a Mr. C***, a man that never utters a syllable.

[1] In the manuscript, the writing of this word is extraordinary tall.

We have tried all stratagems to make him speak. Yesterday he did at last open his mouth, and said *Bec*. We all laughed so at the novelty of the thing, that he shut it again, and will never speak more. I think you can't complain now of my not writing to you. What a volume of trifles! I wrote just the fellow to it from Geneva; had it you? Farewell!

Thine.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

From Bologna, 1739.

I don't know why I told Asheton I would send you an account of what I saw; don't believe it, I don't intend it. Only think what a vile employment 'tis, making catalogues! And then one should have that odious Curl get at one's letters, and publish them like Whitfield's Journal, or for a supplement to the Traveller's Pocket-companion. Dear West, I protest against having seen any thing but what all the world has seen; nay, I have not seen half that, not some of the most common things; not so much as a miracle. Well, but you don't expect it, do you? Except pictures and statues, we are not very fond of sights; don't go a-staring after crooked towers and conundrum staircases. Don't you hate too a jingling epitaph

of one Procul and one Proculus[1] that is here? Now and then we drop in at a procession, or a high-mass, hear the music, enjoy a strange attire, and hate the foul monkhood. Last week was the feast of the Immaculate Conception. On the eve we went to the Franciscans' church to hear the academical exercises. There were moult and moult clergy, about two dozen dames, that treated one another with *illustrissima* and brown kisses, the vice-legate, the gonfalonier, and some senate. The vice-legate, whose conception was not quite so immaculate, is a young personable person, of about twenty, and had on a mighty pretty cardinal kind of habit; 'twou'd make a delightful masquerade dress. We asked his name: Spinola. What, a nephew of the cardinal-legate? *Signor, no: ma credo che gli sia qualche cosa.* He sat on the right-hand with the gonfalonier in two purple fauteuils. Opposite was a throne of crimson damask, with the device of the Academy, the Gelati; and trimmings of gold. Here sat at a table, in black, the head of the academy, between the orator and the first poet. At two semicircular tables on either hand sat three poets and three; silent

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[1] Si procul a Proculo Proculi campana fuisset,
Jam procul a Proculo Proculus ipse foret.
A. D. 1392.
Epitaph on the outside of the wall of the church of St. Proculo.

among many candles. The chief made a little introduction, the orator a long Italian vile harangue. Then the chief, the poet, the poets, who were a Franciscan, an Olivetan, an old abbé, and three lay, read their compositions; and to-day they are pasted up in all parts of the town. As we came out of the church, we found all the convent and neighbouring houses lighted all over with lanthorns of red and yellow paper, and two bonfires. But you are sick of this foolish ceremony; I'll carry you to no more: I will only mention, that we found the Dominicans' church here in mourning for the inquisitor; 'twas all hung with black cloth, furbelowed and festooned with yellow gauze. We have seen a furniture here in a much prettier taste; a gallery of count Caprara's: in the pannels between the windows are pendent trophies of various arms taken by one of his ancestors from the Turks. They are whimsical, romantic, and have a pretty effect. I looked about, but could not perceive the portrait of the lady at whose feet they were indisputably offered. In coming out of Genoa we were more lucky; found the very spot where Horatio and Lothario were to have fought, "*west of the town a mile among the rocks.*"

My dear West, in return for your epigrams of Prior, I will transcribe some old verses too, but which I fancy I can show you in a sort of a new light. They are no newer than Virgil, and, what

is more odd, are in the second Georgic.' Tis, that I have observed that he not only excels when he is like himself, but even when he is very like inferior poets: you will say that they rather excel by being like him: but mind: they are all near one another:

> Si non ingentem foribus domus alta superbis
> Mane salutantum totis vomit ædibus undam:

And the four next lines; are they not just like Martial? In the following he is as much Claudian;

> Illum non populi fasces, non purpura regum
> Flexit, et infidos agitans discordia fratres;
> Aut conjurato descendens Dacus ab Istro.

Then who are these like?

> ——nec ferrea jura,
> Insanumque forum, aut populi tabularia vidit.
> Sollicitant alii remis freta cæca, ruuntque
> In ferrum, penetrant aulas et limina regum.
> Hic petit excidiis urbem miserosque Penates,
> Ut gemmâ bibat, et Sarrano indormiat ostro.

Don't they seem to be Juvenal's?—There are some more, which to me resemble Horace; but perhaps I think so from his having some on a parallel subject. Tell me if I am mistaken; these are they:

> Interea dulces pendent circum oscula nati:
> Casta pudicitiam servat domus——

inclusively to the end of these:

> Hanc olim veteres vitam coluêre Sabini;
> Hanc Remus et frater: sic fortis Etruria crevit,
> Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma.

If the imagination is whimsical; why at least 'tis like me to have imagined it. Adieu, child! We leave Bologna to-morrow. You know 'tis the third city in Italy for pictures: knowing that, you know all. We shall be three days crossing the Apennine to Florence; would it were over!

My dear West, I am yours from St. Peter's to St. Paul's!

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Florence, Jan. 24, 1740, N. S.

Dear West,

I don't know what volumes I may send you from Rome; from Florence I have little inclination to send you any. I see several things that please me calmly, but *à force d'en avoir vû* I have left off screaming, Lord! this! and Lord! that! To speak sincerely, Calais surprised me more than any thing I have seen since. I recollect the joy I used to propose if I could but once see the Great Duke's gallery; I walk into it now with as little emotion as I should into St. Paul's. The statues are a congregation of good sort of people, that I have a

great deal of unruffled regard for. The farther I travel, the less I wonder at any thing: a few days reconcile one to a new spot, or an unseen custom; and men are so much the same every where, that one scarce perceives any change of situation. The same weaknesses, the same passions that in England plunge men into elections, drinking, whoring, exist here, and show themselves in the shapes of Jesuits, Cicisbeos, and Corydon ardebat Alexins. The most remarkable thing I have observed since I came abroad, is, that there are no people so obviously mad as the English. The French, the Italians, have great follies, great faults; but then they are so national, that they cease to be striking. In England, tempers vary so excessively, that almost every one's faults are peculiar to himself. I take this diversity to proceed partly from our climate, partly from our government: the first is changeable, and makes us queer; the latter permits our queernesses to operate as they please. If one could avoid contracting this queerness, it must certainly be the most entertaining to live in England, where such a variety of incidents continually amuse. The incidents of a week in London would furnish all Italy with news for a twelvemonth. The only two circumstances of moment in the life of an Italian, that ever give occasion to their being mentioned, are, being married, and in a year after taking a cicisbeo. Ask the name, the husband, the wife, or the cicisbeo of any person, *et*

voilà qui est fini. Thus, child, 'tis dull dealing here! Methinks your Spanish war is little more lively. By the gravity of the proceedings, one would think both nations were Spaniard. Adieu! Do you remember my maxim, that you used to laugh at? *Every body does every thing, and nothing comes on't.* I am more convinced of it now than ever. I don't know whether S * * * *'s was not still better, *Well, 'gad, there is nothing in nothing.* You see how I distil all my speculations and improvements, that they may lie in a small compass. Do you remember the story of the prince, that after travelling three years brought home nothing but a nut? They cracked it: in it was wrapped up a piece of silk, painted with all the kings, queens, kingdoms, and every thing in the world: after many unfoldings, out stepped a little dog, shook his ears, and fell to dancing a saraband. There is a fairy tale for you. If I had any thing as good as your old song, I would send it too; but I can only thank you for it, and bid you good night.

Yours ever.

P. S. Upon reading my letter, I perceive still plainer the sameness that reigns here; for I find I have said the same things ten times over. I don't care; I have made out a letter, and that was all my affair.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Florence, February 27, 1740, N. S.

WELL, West, I have found a little unmasqued moment to write to you; but for this week past I have been so muffled up in my domino, that I have not had the command of my elbows. But what have you been doing all the mornings? Could you not write then? No, then I was masqued too; I have done nothing but slip out of my domino into bed, and out of bed into my domino. The end of the Carnival is frantic, bacchanalian; all the morn one makes parties in masque to the shops and coffee-houses, and all the evening to the operas and balls. *Then I have danced, good gods, how I have danced!* The Italians are fond to a degree of our country dances: *Cold and raw* they only know by the tune; *Blowzy-bella* is almost Italian, and *Buttered peas* is *Pizelli al buro.* There are but three days more; but the two last are to have balls all the morning at the fine unfinished palace of the Strozzi; and the Tuesday night a masquerade after supper: they sup first, to eat *gras*, and not encroach upon Ash-wednesday. What makes masquerading more agreeable here than in England, is the great deference that is showed to the disguised. Here they do not catch at those little dirty opportunities of saying any ill-natured thing they know of you, do not abuse you

because they may, or talk gross bawdy to a woman of quality. I found the other day by a play of Etheridge's, that we have had a sort of Carnival even since the Reformation; 'tis in *She would if she could,* they talk of going a-mumming in Shrove-tide.——After talking so much of diversions, I fear you will attribute to them the fondness I own I contract for Florence; but it has so many other charms, that I shall not want excuses for my taste. The freedom of the Carnival has given me opportunities to make several acquaintances; and if I have not found them refined, learned, polished, like some other cities, yet they are civil, good-natured, and fond of the English. Their little partiality for themselves, opposed to the violent vanity of the French, makes them very amiable in my eyes. I can give you a comical instance of their great prejudice about nobility; it happened yesterday. While we were at dinner at Mr. Mann's, word was brought by his secretary, that a cavalier demanded audience of him upon an affair of honour. Gray and I flew behind the curtain of the door. An elderly gentleman, whose attire was not certainly correspondent to the greatness of his birth, entered, and informed the British minister that one Martin an English painter had left a challenge for him at his house, for having said Martin was no gentleman. He would by no means have spoke of the duel before the transaction of it, but that his honour, his blood, his

&c. would never permit him to fight with one who was no cavalier; which was what he came to enquire of his excellency. We laughed loud laughs, but unheard: his fright or his nobility had closed his ears. But mark the sequel; the instant he was gone, my very English curiosity hurried me out of the gate St. Gallo; 'twas the place and hour appointed. We had not been driving about above ten minutes, but out popped a little figure, pale but cross, with beard unshaved and hair uncombed, a slouched hat, and a considerable red cloak, in which was wrapped, under his arm, the fatal sword that was to revenge the highly injured Mr. Martin, painter and defendant. I darted my head out of the coach, just ready to say "Your servant, Mr. Martin," and talk about the architecture of the triumphal arch that was building there; but he would not know me, and walked off. We left him to wait for an hour, to grow very cold and very valiant the more it grew past the hour of appointment. We were figuring all the poor creature's huddle of thoughts, and confused hopes of victory or fame, of his unfinished pictures, or his situation upon bouncing into the next world. You will think us strange creatures; but 'twas a pleasant sight, as we knew the poor painter was safe. I have thought of it since, and am inclined to believe that nothing but two English could have been capable of such a jaunt. I remember, 'twas

reported in London that the plague was at a house in the city, and all the town went to see it.

I have this instant received your letter. Lord! I am glad I thought of those parallel passages, since it made you translate them. 'Tis excessively near the original; and yet, I don't know, 'tis very easy too.—It snows here a little to-night, but it never lies but on the mountains.

Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. What is the history of the theatres this winter?

To the Hon. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.[1]

Florence, March 6, 1740, N. S.

Harry, my dear, one would tell you what a monster you are, if one were not sure your conscience tells you so every time you think of me. At Genoa, in the year of our Lord one thousand

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[1] Second son of Francis, first lord Conway, by Charlotte Shorter his third wife. He was afterwards secretary in Ireland during the viceroyalty of William fourth duke of Devonshire; groom of the bed-chamber to George II. and to George III.; secretary of state in the year 1765; lieutenant general of the ordnance in 1770; commander in chief in 1782; and a field-marshal in 1793.

seven hundred and thirty-nine, I received the last letter from you; by your not writing to me since, I imagine you propose to make this leap year. I should have sent many a scold after you in this long interval, had I known where to have scolded; but you told me you should leave Geneva immediately. I have dispatched sundry enquiries into England after you, all fruitless. At last drops in a chance letter to lady Sophy Farmor from a girl at Paris, that tells her for news, Mr. Henry Conway is here. Is he indeed? and why was I to know it only by this scrambling way? Well, I hate you for this neglect, but I find I love you well enough to tell you so. But, dear now, don't let one fall into a train of excuses and reproaches; if the god of indolence is a mightier deity with you than the god of caring for one, tell me, and I won't dun you; but will drop your correspondence as silently as if I owed you money.

If my private consistency was of no weight with you; yet is a man nothing who is within three days journey of a conclave? nay, for what you knew I might have been in Rome. Harry, art thou so indifferent, as to have a cousin at the election of a pope without courting him for news? I'll tell you, were I any where else, and even Dick H—— were at Rome, I think verily I should have wrote to him. Popes, cardinals, adorations, coronations, St. Peter's! oh, what costly sounds! and don't you write to one yet? I shall set out in

about a fortnight, and pray then think me of consequence.

I have crept on upon time from day to day here; fond of Florence to a degree: 'tis infinitely the most agreeable of all the places I have seen since London: that you know one loves, right or wrong, as one does one's nurse. Our little Arno is not boated and swelling like the Thames, but 'tis vastly pretty, and, I don't know how, being Italian, has something visionary and poetical in its stream. Then one's unwilling to leave the gallery, and—but—in short, one's unwilling to get into a post-chaise. I am as surfeited with mountains and inns, as if I had eat them. I have many to pass before I see England again, and no Tory to entertain me on the road! Well, this thought makes me dull, and that makes me finish.

Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. Direct to me, (for to be sure you will not be so outrageous as to leave me quite off) recommandé à mons. Mann, ministre de sa majesté Britannique à Florence.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Siena, March 22, 1740, N. S.

DEAR WEST,

PROBABLY now you will hear something of the Conclave; we have left Florence, and are got hither on the way to a pope. In three hours time we have seen all the good contents of this city: 'tis old, and very smug, with very few inhabitants. You must not believe Mr. Addison about the wonderful Gothic nicety of the dome: the materials are richer, but the workmanship and taste not near so good as in several I have seen. We saw a college of the Jesuits, where there are taught to draw above fifty boys: they are disposed in long chambers in the manner of Eton, but cleaner. N. B. We were not *bolstered*,[1] so we wished you with us. Our Cicerone, who has less classic knowledge and more superstition than a colleger, upon showing us the she-wolf, the arms of Siena, told us that Romulus and Remus were nursed by a wolf, *per la volonta di Dio, si può dire;* and that one might see by the arms, that the same founders built Rome and Siena. Another dab of Romish superstition, not unworthy of presbyterian divinity, we met with in a book of drawings: 'twas the Virgin

[1] An Eton phrase.

standing on a tripod composed of Adam, Eve and the Devil, to express her immaculate conception.

You can't imagine how pretty the country is between this and Florence; millions of little hills planted with trees, and tipped with villas or convents. We left unseen the Great Duke's villas and several palaces in Florence till our return from Rome: the weather has been so cold, how could one go to them? In Italy they seem to have found out how hot their climate is, but not how cold; for there are scarce any chimneys, and most of the apartments painted in fresco; so that one has the additional horror of freezing with imaginary marble. The men hang little earthen pans of coals upon their wrists, and the women have portable stoves under their petticoats to warm their nakedness, and carry silver shovels in their pockets, with which their Cicisbeos stir them—Hush! by them, I mean their stoves. I have nothing more to tell you; I'll carry my letter to Rome and finish it there.

Rè di Coffano, March 28, where lived one of the three kings.

The king of Coffano carried presents of myrrh, gold, and frankincense: I don't know where the devil he found them, for in all his dominions we have not seen the value of a shrub. We have the honour of lodging under his roof to-night. Lord! such a place, such an extent of ugliness! Alone

inn upon a black mountain, by the side of an old fortress! no curtains or windows, only shutters! no testers to the beds! no earthly thing to eat but some eggs and a few little fishes! This lovely spot is now known by the name of Radicofani. Coming down a steep hill with two miserable hackneys, one fell under the chaise; and while we were disengaging him, a chaise came by with a person in a red cloak, a white handkerchief on its head, and black hat: we thought it a fat old woman; but it spoke in a shrill little pipe, and proved itself to be Senesini.

I forgot to tell you an inscription I copied from the portal of the dome of Siena:

> Annus centenus Romæ semper est jubilenus;
> Crimina laxantur si pœnitet ista donantur;
> Sic ordinavit Bonifacius et roboravit.

Rome, March 26.

We are this instant arrived, tired and hungry! O! the charming city—I believe it is—for I have not seen a syllable yet, only the Pons Milvius and an obelisk. The Cassian and Flaminian ways were terrible disappointments; not one Rome tomb left; their very ruins ruined. The English are numberless. My dear West, I know at Rome you will not have a grain of pity for one; but indeed 'tis dreadful, dealing with school-boys just broke loose, or old fools that are come abroad at forty to see the world, like sir Wilful Witwou'd. I

don't know whether you will receive this, or any other I write: but though I shall write often, you and Asheton must not wonder if none come to you; for, though I am harmless in my nature, my name has some mystery in it.[1] Good night! I have no more time or paper. Asheton, child, I'll write to you next post. Write us no treasons, be sure!

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Rome, April 16, 1740, N. S.

I'LL tell you, West, because one is amongst new things, you think one can always write new things. When I first came abroad, every thing struck me, and I wrote its history; but now I am grown so used to be surprised, that I don't perceive any flutter in myself when I meet with any novelties; curiosity and astonishment wear off, and the next thing is, to fancy that other people know as much of places as one's self; or, at least, one does not remember that they do not. It appears to me as odd to write to you of St. Peter's, as it would do to you to write of Westminster-abbey. Besides, as one looks at churches, &c. with a book of travels

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[1] He means the name of Walpole at Rome, where the Pretender and many of his adherents then resided.

in one's hand, and sees every thing particularized there, it would appear transcribing, to write upon the same subjects. I know you will hate me for this declaration; I remember how ill I used to take it when any body served me so that was travelling.—Well, I will tell you something, if you will love me: You have seen prints of the ruins of the temple of Minerva Medica; you shall only hear its situation, and then figure what a villa might be laid out there. 'Tis in the middle of a garden: at a little distance are two subterraneous grottos, which were the burial-places of the liberti of Augustus. There are all the niches and covers of the urns with the inscriptions remaining; and in one, very considerable remains of an ancient stucco ceiling with paintings in grotesque. Some of the walks would terminate upon the Castellum Aquæ Martiæ, St. John Lateran, and St. Maria Maggiore, besides other churches; the walls of the garden would be two aqueducts, and the entrance through one of the old gates of Rome. This glorious spot is neglected, and only serves for a small vineyard and kitchen-garden.

I am very glad that I see Rome while it yet exists: before a great number of years are elapsed, I question whether it will be worth seeing. Between the ignorance and poverty of the present Romans, every thing is neglected and falling to decay; the villas are entirely out of repair, and the palaces so ill kept, that half the pictures are

spoiled by damp. At the villa Ludovisi is a large oracular head of red marble, colossal, and with vast foramina for the eyes and mouth:—the man that showed the palace said it was *un ritratto della famiglia.* The cardinal Corsini has so thoroughly pushed on the misery of Rome by impoverishing it, that there is no money but paper to be seen. He is reckoned to have amassed three millions of crowns. You may judge of the affluence the nobility live in, when I assure you, that what the chief princes allow for their own eating is a testoon a day; eighteen pence: there are some extend their expence to five pauls, or half a crown: cardinal Albani is called extravagant for laying out ten pauls for his dinner and supper. You may imagine they never have any entertainments: so far from it, they never have any company. The princesses and duchesses particularly lead the dismallest of lives. Being the posterity of popes, though of worse families than the ancient nobility, they expect greater respect than my ladies the countesses and marquises will pay them; consequently they consort not, but mope in a vast palace with two miserable tapers, and two or three monsignori, whom they are forced to court and humour, that they may not be entirely deserted. Sundays they do issue forth in a vast unwieldy coach to the Corso.

In short, child, after sunset one passes one's time here very ill; and if I did not wish for you

in the mornings, it would be no compliment to tell you that I do in the evening. Lord! how many English I could change for you, and yet buy you wondrous cheap! And then French and Germans I could fling into the bargain by dozens. Nations swarm here. You will have a great fat French cardinal garnished with thirty abbés roll into the area of St. Peter's, gape, turn short, and talk of the chapel of Versailles. I heard one of them say t'other day, he had been at the *Capitale*. One asked of course how he liked it—*Ah! il y a assez de belles choses.*

Tell Asheton I have received his letter, and will write next post; but I am in a violent hurry and have no more time; so Gray finishes this delicately——

Nor so delicate; nor indeed would his conscience suffer him to write to you, till he received *de vos nouvelles*, if he had not the tail of another person's letter to use by way of evasion. I sha'n't describe, as being in the only place in the world that deserves it; which may seem an odd reason—but they say as how it's fulsome, and every body does it (and I suppose every body says the same thing); else I should tell you a vast deal about the Coliseum, and the Conclave, and the Capitol, and these matters. *A-propos du Colisée*, if you don't know what it is, the prince Borghese will be very capable of giving you some account of it, who told an

Englishman that asked what it was built for: "They say 'twas for Christians to fight with tigers in." We are just come from adoring a great piece of the true cross, St. Longinus's spear, and St. Veronica's handkerchief; all which have been this evening exposed to view in St. Peter's. In the same place, and on the same occasion last night, Walpole saw a poor creature naked to the waist discipline himself with a scourge filled with iron prickles, till he had made himself a raw doublet, that he took for red satin torn, and showing the skin through. I should tell you, that he fainted away three times at the sight, and I twice and a half at the repetition of it. All this is performed by the light of a vast fiery cross, composed of hundreds of little crystal lamps, which appears through the great altar under the grand tribuna, as if hanging by itself in the air. All the confraternities of the city resort thither in solemn procession, habited in linen frocks, girt with a cord, and their heads covered with a cowl all over, that has only two holes before to see through. Some of these are all black, others parti-coloured and white: and with these masqueraders that vast church is filled, who are seen thumping their breast, and kissing the pavement with extreme devotion. But methinks I am describing:—'tis an ill habit; but this, like every thing else, will wear off. We have sent you our compliments by a friend of yours, and correspondent in a corner,

who seems a very agreeable man; one Mr. Williams: I am sorry he staid so little a while in Rome. I forget Porto Bello all this while; pray let us know where it is, and whether you or Asheton had any hand in the taking of it. Duty to the admiral.... Adieu!

Ever yours,
T. GRAY.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Rome, April 23, 1740, N. S.

As I have wrote you two such long letters lately, my dear Hal, I did not hurry myself to answer your last; but choose to write to poor Selwyn[1] upon his illness. I pity you excessively upon finding him in such a situation: what a shock it must have been to you! He deserves so much love from all that know him, and you owe him so much friendship, that I can scarce conceive a greater shock. I am very glad you did not write to me till he was out of danger; for this great distance would have added to my pain, as I must have waited so long for another letter. I charge you, don't let him relapse into balls; he does not

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[1] John Selwyn, elder brother of George Augustus Selwyn. He died about 1750.

love them, and, if you please, your example may keep him out of them. You are extremely pretty people to be dancing and trading with French poulterers and pastry-cooks, when a hard frost is starving half the nation, and the Spanish war ought to be employing the other half. We are much more public-spirited here; we live upon the public news, and triumph abundantly upon the taking Porto-Bello. If you are not entirely debauched with your balls, you must be pleased with an answer of lord Hartington's to the governor of Rome. He asked him what they had determined about the vessel that the Spaniards took under the cannon of Civita Vecchia, whether they had restored it to the English? The governor said, they had done justice. My lord replied, "If you had not, we should have done it ourselves." Pray reverence our spirit, lieutenant Hal.

Sir, Moscovita is not a pretty woman, and she does sing ill; that's all.

My dear Harry, I must now tell you a little about myself, and answer your questions. How I like the inanimate part of Rome you will soon perceive at my arrival in England; I am far gone in medals, lamps, idols, prints, &c. and all the small commodities to the purchase of which I can attain; I would buy the Coliseum if I could: judge. My mornings are spent in the most agreeable manner; my evenings ill enough. Roman conversations are dreadful things! such untoward

mawkins as the princesses! and the princes are worse. Then the whole city is littered with French and German abbés, who make up a dismal contrast with the inhabitants. The conclave is far from enlivening us; its secrets don't transpire. I could give you names of this cardinal and that, that are talked of, but each is contradicted the next hour. I was there t'other day to visit one of them, and one of the most agreeable, Alexander Albani. I had the opportunity of two cardinals making their entry: upon that occasion the gate is unlocked, and their eminences come to talk to their acquaintance over the threshold. I have received great civilities from him I named to you, and I wish he were out, that I might receive greater: a friend of his does the honours of Rome for him; but you know that it is unpleasant to visit by proxy. Card. Delci, the object of the Corsini faction, is dying; the hot weather will probably dispatch half a dozen more. Not that it is hot yet; I am now writing to you by my fire-side.

Harry, you saw lord Deskfoord at Geneva; don't you like him? He is a mighty sensible man. There are few young people have so good understandings. He is mighty grave, and so are you; but you can both be pleasant when you have a mind. Indeed one can make you pleasant, but his solemn *Scotchery* is a little formidable: before you I can play the fool from morning to night,

courageously. Good night. I have other letters to write, and must finish this.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Rome, May 7, 1740, N. S.

Dear West,

'Twou'd be quite rude and unpardonable in one not to wish you joy upon the great conquests that you are all committing all over the world. We heard the news last night from Naples, that admiral Haddock had met the Spanish convoy going to Majorca, and taken it all, all; three thousand men, three colonels, and a Spanish grandee. We conclude it is true, for the Neapolitan majesty mentioned it at dinner. We are going thither in about a week to wish him joy of it too. 'Tis with some apprehensions we go too, of having a pope chosen in the interim: that would be cruel, you know. But, thank our stars, there is no great probability of it. Feuds and contentions run high among the Eminences. A notable one happened this week. Cardinal Zinzendorff and two more had given their votes for the general of the Capucins: he is of the Barberini family, not a cardinal, but a worthy man. Not effecting any thing, Zinzendorff voted for Coscia, and declared it publicly. Cardinal Petra reproved him; but the German

replied, he thought Coscia as fit to be pope as any of them. It seems, his pique to the whole body is, there having denied a daily admission of a pig into the conclave for his eminence's use; who being much troubled with the gout, was ordered by his mother to bathe his leg in pig's blood every morning.

Who should have a vote t'other day but the *Cardinalino* of Toledo? Were he older, the queen of Spain might possibly procure more than one for him, though scarcely enough.

Well, but we won't talk politics; shall we talk antiquities? Gray and I discovered a considerable curiosity lately. In an unfrequented quarter of the Colonna garden lie two immense fragments of marble, formerly part of a frieze to some building; 'tis not known of what. They are of Parian marble; which may give one some idea of the magnificence of the rest of the building, for these pieces were at the very top. Upon enquiry, we were told they had been measured by an architect, who declared they were larger than any member of St. Peter's. The length of one of the pieces is above sixteen feet. They were formerly sold to a stone-cutter for five thousand crowns; but, Clement XI. would not permit them to be sawed, annulled the bargain, and laid a penalty of twelve thousand crowns upon the family if they parted with them. I think it was a right judged thing. Is it not amazing that so vast a structure should

not be known of, or that it should be so entirely destroyed? But indeed at Rome this is a common surprise; for, by the remains one sees of the Roman grandeur in their structures, 'tis evident that there must have been more pains taken to destroy those piles than to raise them. They are more demolished than any time or chance could have effected. I am persuaded that in an hundred years Rome will not be worth seeing; 'tis less so now than one would believe. All the public pictures are decayed or decaying; the few ruins cannot last long; and the statues and private collections must be sold, from the great poverty of the families. There are now selling no less than three of the principal collections, the Barberini, the Sacchetti, and Ottoboni: the latter belonged to the cardinal who died in the conclave. I must give you an instance of his generosity, or rather ostentation. When lord Carlisle was here last year, who is a great virtuoso, he asked leave to see the cardinal's collection of cameos and intaglios. Ottoboni gave leave, and ordered the person who showed them to observe which my lord admired most. My lord admired many; they were all sent him the next morning. He sent the cardinal back a fine gold repeater; who returned him an agate snuff-box, and more cameos of ten times the value. *Voila qui est fini!* Had my lord produced more golden repeaters, it would have been begging more cameos.

Adieu, my dear West! You see I write often and much, as you desired it. Do answer one now and then with any little job that is done in England. Good-night.

Yours ever.

TO RICHARD WEST, ESQ.

Naples, June 14, 1740, N. S.

DEAR WEST,

ONE hates writing descriptions that are to be found in every book of travels; but we have seen something to-day that I am sure you never read of, and perhaps never heard of. Have you ever heard of the subterraneous town? a whole Roman town with all its edifices remaining under-ground? Don't fancy the inhabitants buried it there to save it from the Goths: they were buried with it themselves; which is a caution we are not told they ever took. You remember in Titus's time there were several cities destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius, attended with an earthquake. Well, this was one of them, not very considerable, and then called Herculaneum. Above it has since been built Portici, about three miles from Naples, where the king has a villa. This under-ground city is perhaps one of the noblest curiosities that ever has been discovered. It was found out by chance about a year and half ago. They began

digging, they found statues; they dug further, they found more. Since that they have made a very considerable progress, and find continually. You may walk the compass of a mile; but by the misfortune of the modern town being overhead, they are obliged to proceed with great caution, lest they destroy both one and t'other. By this occasion the path is very narrow, just wide enough and high enough for one man to walk upright. They have hollowed as they found it easiest to work, and have carried their streets not exactly where were the ancient ones, but sometimes before houses, sometimes through them. You would imagine that all the fabrics were crushed together; on the contrary, except some columns, they have found all the edifices standing upright in their proper situation. There is one inside of a temple quite perfect, with the middle arch, two columns, and two pilasters. It is built of brick plastered over, and painted with architecture: almost all the insides of the houses are in the same manner; and what is very particular, the general ground of all the painting is red. Besides this temple, they make out very plainly an amphitheatre: the stairs, of white marble, and the seats are very perfect; the inside was painted in the same colour with the private houses, and great part cased with white marble. They have found among other things some fine statues, some human bones, some rice, medals, and a few paintings extremely

fine. These latter are preferred to all the ancient paintings that have ever been discovered. We have not seen them yet, as they are kept in the king's apartment, whither all these curiosities are transplanted; and 'tis difficult to see them—but we shall. I forgot to tell you, that in several places the beams of the houses remain, but burnt to charcoal; so little damaged that they retain visibly the grain of the wood, but upon touching crumble to ashes. What is remarkable, there are no other marks or appearance of fire, but what are visible on these beams.

There might certainly be collected great light from this reservoir of antiquities, if a man of learning had the inspection of it; if he directed the working, and would make a journal of the discoveries. But I believe there is no judicious choice made of directors. There is nothing of the kind known in the world; I mean a Roman city entire of that age, and that has not been corrupted with modern repairs.[1] Besides scrutinizing this very carefully, I should be inclined to search for the remains of the other towns that were partners with this in the general ruin. 'Tis certainly an advantage to the learned world, that this has been laid up so long. Most of the discoveries in Rome were made in a barbarous age, where they only ran-

[1] Pompeia was not then discovered.

sacked the ruins in quest of treasure, and had no regard to the form and being of the building; or to any circumstances that might give light into its use and history. I shall finish this long account with a passage which Gray has observed in Statius, and which directly pictures out this latent city:

> Hæc ego Chalcidicis ad te, Marcelle, sonabam
> Littoribus, fractas ubi Vestius egerit iras,
> Æmula Trinacriis volvens incendia flammis.
> Mira fides! credetne virûm ventura propago,
> Cum segetes iterum, cum jam hæc deserta vireburt,
> Infra urbes populosque premi?
>
> SYLV. lib. iv. epist. 4.

Adieu, my dear West! and believe me

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H S. CONWAY.

Re di Cofano, vulg. Radicofani, July 5, 1740; N.S.

You will wonder, my dear Hal, to find me on the road from Rome: why, intend I did to stay for a new popedom, but the old eminences are cross and obstinate, and will not choose one, the holy ghost does not know when. There is a horrid thing called the mal' aria, that comes to Rome every summer and kills one, and I did not care for being killed so far from christian burial. We

have been jolted to death; my servants let us come without springs to the chaise, and we are wore threadbare: to add to our disasters, I have sprained my ankle, and have brought it along, laid upon a little box of bawbles that I have bought for presents in England. Perhaps I may pick you out some little trifle there, but don't depend upon it; you are a disagreeable creature, and may be I shall not care for you. Though I am so tired in this devil of a place, yet I have taken it into my head, that it is like Hamilton's Bawn, and I must write to you. 'Tis the top of a black barren mountain, a vile little town at the foot of an old citadel: yet this, know you, was the residence of one of the three kings that went to Christ's birth-day; his name was Alabaster, Abarasser, or some such thing; the other two were kings, one of the East, the other of Cologn. 'Tis this of Cofano, who was represented in an ancient painting, found in the Palatine Mount, now in the possession of Dr. Mead; he was crowned by Augustus. Well, but about writing —what do you think I write with? Nay, with a pen; there was never a one to be found in the whole circumference *but one*, and that was in the possession of the governor, and had been used time out of mind to write the parole with: I was forced to send to borrow it. It was sent me under the conduct of a serjeant and two Swiss, with desire to return it when I should have done with

it. 'Tis a curiosity, and worthy to be laid up with the relics which we have just been seeing in a small hovel of Capucins on the side of the hill, and which were all brought by his majesty from Jerusalem. Among other things of great sanctity there is a set of gnashing of teeth, the grinders very entire; a bit of the worm that never dies, preserved in spirits; a crow of St. Peter's cock, very useful against Easter; the crisping and curling, frizzling and frowning of Mary Magdalen, which she cut off on growing devout. The good man that showed us all these commodities was got into such a train of calling them the blessed this, and the blessed that, that at last he showed us a bit of the blessed fig-tree that Christ cursed.

Florence, July 9.

My dear Harry,

We are come hither, and I have received another letter from you with Hosier's Ghost. Your last put me in pain for you, when you talked of going to Ireland; but now I find your brother and sister go with you, I am not much concerned. Should I be? You have but to say, for my feelings are extremely at your service to dispose as you please. Let us see: you are to come back to stand for some place; that will be about April. 'Tis a sort of thing I should do too; and then we should see one another, and that would be charming: but it is a sort of thing I have no mind to

do; and then we shall not see one another, unless you would come hither—but that you cannot do: nay, I would not have you, for then I shall be gone.—So! there are many *ifs* that just signify nothing at all. Return I must sooner than I shall like. I am happy here to a degree. I'll tell you my situation. I am lodged with Mr. Mann[1], the best of creatures. I have a terreno all to myself, with an open gallery on the Arno where I am now writing to you. Over against me is the famous Gallery; and, on either hand, two fair bridges. Is not this charming and cool? The air is so serene, and so secure, that one sleeps with all the windows and doors thrown open to the river, and only covered with a slight gauze to keep away the gnats. Lady Pomfret[2] has a charming conversation once a week. She has taken a vast palace and a vast garden, which is vastly commode, especially to the cicisbeo-part of mankind, who have free indulgence to wander in pairs about the arbours. Your know her daughters: lady Sophia[3] is still, nay she must be, the beauty

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[1] Afterwards sir Horace Mann. He was at this time resident at Florence from George II.

[2] Henrietta Louisa, wife of Thomas earl of Pomfret.

[3] Afterwards married to John lord Carteret, who became earl of Granville on the death of his mother in the year 1744.

she was: lady Charlotte[4] is much improved; and is the cleverest girl in the world; speaks the purest Tuscan like any Florentine. The princess Craon[5] has a constant pharaoh and supper every night, where one is quite at one's ease. I am going into the country with her and the prince for a little while, to a villa of the great duke's. The people are good-humoured here and easy; and what makes me pleased with them, they are pleased with me. One loves to find people care for one, when they can have no view in it.

You see how glad I am to have reasons for not returning; I wish I had no better.

As to Hosier's Ghost, I think it very easy, and consequently pretty; but, from the ease, should never have guessed it Glover's. I delight in your, *the patriots cry it up, and the courtiers cry it down, and the hawkers cry it up and down,* and your laconic history of the King and sir Robert, on going to Hanover, and turning out the duke of

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[4] Afterwards married to William Finch, brother to * * * earl of Winchelsea.

[5] The princess Craon was the favourite mistress of Leopold the last duke of Lorrain, who married her to monsieur de Beauveau, and prevailed on the emperor to make him a prince of the empire. They at this time resided at Florence, where prince Craon was at the head of the council of regency.

Argyle. The epigram too you sent me on the same occasion is charming.

Unless I sent you back news that you and others send me, I can send you none. I have left the conclave, which is the only stirring thing in this part of the world, except the child that the queen of Naples is to be delivered of in August. There is no likelihood the conclave will end, unless the messages take effect which 'tis said the Imperial and French ministers have sent to their respective courts for leave to quit the Corsini for the Albani faction: otherwise there will never be a pope. Corsini has lost the only one he could have ventured to make pope, and him he designed; 'twas Cenci, a relation of the Corsini's mistress. The last morning Corsini made him rise, stuffed a dish of chocolate down his throat, and would carry him to the scrutiny. The poor old creature went, came back, and died. I am sorry to have lost the sight of the pope's coronation, but I might have staid for seeing it till I had been old enough to be pope myself.

Harry, what luck the chancellor has! first, indeed, to be in himself so great a man; but then in accidents: he is made chief justice and peer, when Talbot is made chancellor and peer: Talbot dies in a twelvemonth, and leaves him the seals at an age when others are scarce made solicitors:— then marries his son into one of the first families of Britain, obtains a patent for a marquisate and

eight thousand pounds a year after the duke of Kent's death: the duke dies in a fortnight, and leaves them all! People talk of fortune's wheel, that is always rolling: troth, my lord Hardwicke has overtaken her wheel, and rolled along with it.

I perceive miss Jenny[6] would not venture to Ireland, nor stray so far from London; I am glad I shall always know where to find her within three-score miles. I must say a word to my lord, which, Harry, be sure you don't read. ["My dear lord; I don't love troubling you with letters, because I know you don't love the trouble of answering them; not that I should insist on that ceremony, but I hate to burthen any one's conscience. Your brother tells me he is to stand member of parliament: without telling me so, I am sure he owes it to you. I am sure you will not repent setting him up; nor will he be ungrateful to a brother who deserves so much, and whose least merit is not the knowing how to employ so great a fortune."]

There, Harry, I have done. Don't suspect me: I have said no ill of you behind your back. Make my best compliments to miss Conway.[7]

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[6] Miss Jane Conway, half sister to Henry Seymour Conway. She died unmarried in 1749.

[7] Afterwards married to John Harris, esq. of Hayne in Devonshire.

I thought I had done, and lo, I had forgot to tell you, that who d'ye think is here?—Even Mr. More! our Rheims Mr. More! the fortification, hornwork, ravelin, bastion Mr. More! *which is very pleasant sure.* At the end of the eighth side, I think I need make no excuse for leaving off; but I am going to write to Selwyn, and to the lady of the mountain; from whom I have had a very kind letter. She has at last received the Chantilly brass. Good night: write to me from one end of the world to t'other.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Florence, July 31, 1740, N. S.

Dear West,

I have advised with the most notable antiquarians of this city on the meaning of *Thur gut Luetis.* I can get no satisfactory interpretation. In my own opinion 'tis Welsh. I don't love offering conjectures on a language in which I have hitherto made little proficiency, but I will trust you with my explication. You know the famous Aglaughlan, mother of Cadwalladhor, was renowned for her conjugal virtues, and grief on the death of her royal spouse. I conclude this medal was struck in her regency, by her express order, to the memory of her lord, and that the inscription

Thur gut Luetis means no more than *her dear Llewis or Llewellin.*

In return for your coins I send you two or three of different kinds. The first is a money of one of the kings of Naples; the device a horse; the motto, *Equitas regni.* This curious pun is on a coin in the Great Duke's collection, and by great chance I have met with a second. Another is, a satirical medal struck on Lewis XIV.; 'tis a bomb, covered with flower-de-luces, bursting; the motto, *Se ipsissimo.* The last, and almost the only one I ever saw with a text well applied, is a German medal with a rebellious town besieged and blocked up; the inscription, *This kind is not expelled but by fasting.*

Now I mention medals, have they yet struck the intended one on the taking Porto Bello? Admiral Vernon will shine in our medallic history. We have just received the news of the bombarding Carthagena, and the taking Chagre. We are in great expectation of some important victory obtained by the squadron under sir John Norris: we are told the Duke is to be of the expedition; is it true? All the letters too talk of France's suddenly declaring war; I hope they will defer it for a season, or one shall be obliged to return through Germany.

The conclave still subsists, and the divisions still increase; it was very near separating last week, but by breaking into two popes; they

were on the dawn of a schism. Aldovrandi had thirty-three voices for three days, but could not procure the requisite two more; the Camerlingo having engaged his faction to sign a protestation against him, and each party were inclined to elect. I don't know whether one should wish for a schism or not; it might probably rekindle the zeal for the church in the powers of Europe, which has been so far decaying.

On Wednesday we expect a third she-meteor. Those learned luminaries the ladies Pomfret and W*** are to be joined by the lady Mary Wortley Montague. You have not been witness to the rhapsody of mystic nonsense which these two fair ones debate incessantly, and consequently cannot figure what must be the issue of this triple alliance: we have some idea of it. Only figure the coalition of prudery, debauchery, sentiment, history, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and metaphysics; all, except the second, understood by halves, by quarters, or not at all. You shall have the journals of this notable academy. Adieu, my dear West!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Though far unworthy to enter into so learned and political a correspondence, I am employed *pour barbouiller une page de 7 pouces et demie en hauteur, et 5 en largeur;* and to inform you

that we are at Florence, a city of Italy, and the capital of Tuscany: the latitude I cannot justly tell, but it is governed by a prince called Great-duke; an excellent place to employ all one's animal sensations in, but utterly contrary to one's rational powers. I have struck a medal upon myself: the device is thus O, and the motto *Nihilissimo*, which I take in the most concise manner to contain a full account of my person, sentiments, occupations, and late glorious successes. If you choose to be annihilated too, you cannot do better than undertake this journey. Here you shall get up at twelve o'clock, breakfast till three, dine till five, sleep till six, drink cooling liquors till eight, go to the bridge till ten, sup till two, and so sleep till twelve again.

> Labore fessi venimus ad larem nostrum,
> Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto:
> Hoc est, quod unum est, pro laboribus tantis.
> O quid solutis est beatius curis?

We shall never come home again; a universal war is just upon the point of breaking out; all outlets will be shut up. I shall be secure in my nothingness, while you, that will be so absurd as to exist, will envy me. You don't tell me what proficiency you make in the noble science of defence. Don't you start still at the sound of a gun? Have you learned to say Ha! ha! and is your

neck clothed with thunder? Are your whiskers of a tolerable length? And have you got drunk yet with brandy and gunpowder? Adieu, noble captain!

T. GRAY.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY

Florence, September 25, 1740. N. S.

MY DEAR HAL,

I BEGIN to answer your letter the moment I have read it, because you bid me; but I grow so unfit for a correspondence with any body in England, that I have almost left it off. 'Tis so long since I was there, and I am so utterly a stranger to every thing that passes there, that I must talk vastly in the dark to those I write; and having in a manner settled myself here, where there can be no news, I am void of all matter for filling up a letter. As, by the absence of the great duke, Florence is become in a manner a country town, you may imagine that we are not without demêlés; but for a country town I believe there never were a set of people so peaceable, and such strangers to scandal. 'Tis the family of love, where every body is paired, and go as constantly together as parroquets. Here nobody hangs or drowns themselves; they are not ready to cut one another's throats about elections or parties; don't

think that wit consists in saying bold truths, or humour in getting drunk. But I shall give you no more of their characters, because I am so unfortunate as to think that their encomium consists in being the reverse of the English, who in general are either mad, or enough to make other people so. After telling you so fairly my sentiments, you may believe, my dear Harry, that I had rather see you here than in England. 'Tis an evil wish for you, who should not be lost in so obscure a place as this. I will not make you compliments, or else here is a charming opportunity for saying what I think of you. As I am convinced you love me, and as I am conscious you have one strong reason for it, I will own to you, that for my own peace you should wish me to remain here. I am so well within and without, that you would scarce know me: I am younger than ever, think of nothing but diverting myself, and live in a round of pleasures. We have operas, concerts, and balls, mornings and evenings. I dare not tell you all one's idlenesses; you would look so grave and senatorial, at hearing that one rises at eleven in the morning, goes to the opera at nine at night, to supper at one, and to bed at three! But literally here the evenings and nights are so charming and so warm, one can't avoid 'em.

Did I tell you lady Mary Wortley is here? She laughs at my lady W***, scolds my lady Pom-

fret, and is laughed at by the whole town. Her dress, her avarice, and her impudence must amaze any one that never heard her name. She wears a foul mob, that does not cover her greasy black locks, that hang loose, never combed or curled; an old mazarine blue wrapper, that gapes open and discovers a canvass petticoat. Her face swelled violently on one side with the remains of a ———, partly covered with a plaister, and partly with white paint, which for cheapness she has bought so coarse, that you would not use it to wash a chimney.—In three words I will give you her picture as we drew it in the *Sortes Virgilianæ*—

Insanam vatem aspicies.

I give you my honour, we did not choose it; but Gray, Mr. Cooke, sir Fr. Dashwood and I, and several others, drew it fairly amongst a thousand for different people, most of which did not hit as you may imagine: those that did I will tell you.

For our most religious and gracious ———

—Dii, talem terris avertite pestem.

For one that would be our most religious and gracious ———

Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro
Languescit moriens, lassove papavera collo
Demisêre caput, pluviâ cum fortè gravantur.

For his **son.**

Regis Romani; primus qui legibus urbem
Fundabit, Curibus parvis et **paupere terrâ**
Missus in **imperium magnum.**

For sir Robert.

Res dura **et regni novitas me talia** cogunt
Moliri, et late **fines custode tueri.**

I will shew you **the rest** when **I see** you.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Florence, Oct. 2, 1740, N. S.

DEAR WEST,

T'OTHER night as we (you know who *we* are) were walking on the charming bridge, just before going to a wedding assembly, we said, "Lord, I wish, just as we are got into the room, they would call us out, and say, West is arrived! We would make him dress instantly, and carry him back to the entertainment." How he would stare and wonder at a thousand things, that no longer strike us as odd!" Would not you? One agreed that you should have come directly by sea from Dover, and be set down at Leghorn, without setting foot in any other foreign town, and so land at *Us*, in all your first full amaze; for you are to know, that astonishment rubs off violently; we **did not cry out**

Lord! half so much at Rome as at Calais, which to this hour I look upon as one of the most surprising cities in the universe. My dear child, what if you were to take this little sea-jaunt? One would recommend sir John Norris's convoy to you, but one should be laughed at now for supposing that he is ever to sail beyond Torbay. The Italians take Torbay for an English town in the hands of the Spaniards, after the fashion of Gibraltar, and imagine 'tis a wonderful strong place, by our fleet's having retired from before it so often, and so often returned.

We went to this wedding that I told you of; 'twas a charming feast: a large palace finely illuminated; there were all the beauties, all the jewels, and all the sugar-plums of Florence. Servants loaded with great chargers full of comfits heap the tables with them, the women fall on with both hands, and stuff their pockets and every creek and corner about them. You would be as much amazed at us as at any thing you saw: instead of being deep in the liberal arts, and being in the Gallery every morning, as I thought of course to be sure I would be, we are in all the idlenesses and amusements of the town. For me, I am grown so lazy, and so tired of seeing sights, that, though I have been at Florence six months, I have not seen Leghorn, Pisa, Lucca, or Pistoia; nay, not so much as one of the Great Duke's villas.

I have contracted so great an aversion to inns and postchaises, and have so absolutely lost all curiosity, that, except the towns in the straight road to Great Britain, I shall scarce see a jot more of a foreign land; and trust me, when I return, I will not visit Welsh mountains, like Mr. Williams. After mount Cenis, the Boccheto, the Giogo, Radicofani, and the Appian Way, one has mighty little hunger after travelling: I shall be mighty apt to set up my staff at Hyde-park-corner: the alehouseman there at Hercules's Pillars was certainly returned from his travels into foreign parts.

Now I'll answer your questions.

I have made no discoveries in ancient or modern arts. Mr. Addison travelled through the poets, and not through Italy; for all his ideas are borrowed from the descriptions, and not from the reality. He saw places as they were, not as they are. I am very well acquainted with doctor Cocchi; he is a good sort of man, rather than a great man; he is a plain honest creature with quiet knowledge, but I dare say all the English have told you, he has a very particular understanding: I really don't believe they meant to impose on you, for they thought so. As to Bondelmonti, he is much less; he is a low mimic; the brightest cast of his parts attains to the composition of a sonnet: he talks irreligion with English boys, sentiments with my

sister,[1] and bad French with any one that will hear him. I will transcribe you a little song that he made t'other day; 'tis pretty enough; Gray turned it into Latin, and I into English; you will honour him highly by putting it into French, and Asheton into Greek. Here 'tis:

Spesso amor sotto la forma
D'amistà ride, e s'asconde;
Poi si mischia, e si confonde
Con lo sdegno e col rancor.

In pietade ei si trasforma,
Par trastullo e par dispetto;
Ma nel suo diverso aspetto,
Sempre egli è l'istesso amor.

Risit amicitiæ interdùm velatus amictu,
Et benè compositâ veste fefellit amor:
Mox iræ assumpsit cultus faciemque minantem,
Inque odium versus, versus et in lacrymas:
Sudentem fuge; nec lacrymanti aut crede furenti;
Idem est dissimili semper in ore deus.

Love often in the comely mien
Of friendship fancies to be seen;
Soon again he shifts his dress,
And wears disdain and rancour's face.

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[1] Margaret Rolle, wife of Robert Walpole, eldest son of sir Robert Walpole, created lord Walpole during the lifetime of his father.

To gentle pity then he changes;
Thro' wantonness, thro' piques he ranges;
But in whatever shape he moves,
He's still himself, and still is love.

See how we trifle! but one can't pass one's youth too amusingly; for one must grow old, and that in England; two most serious circumstances, either of which makes people grey in the twinkling of a bedstaff; for know you, there is not a country upon earth where there are so many old fools, and so few young ones.

Now I proceed in my answers.

I made but small collections, and have only bought some bronzes and medals, a few busts, and two or three pictures: one of my busts is to be mentioned; 'tis the famous Vespasian in touchstone, reckoned the best in Rome except the Caracalla of the Farnese: I gave but twenty-two pounds for it at cardinal Ottoboni's sale. One of my medals is as great a curiosity: 'tis of Alexander Severus, with the amphitheatre in brass; this reverse is extant on medals of his, but mine is a *medagliuncino*, or small medallion, and the only one with this reverse known in the world: 'twas found by a peasant while I was in Rome, and sold by him for sixpence to an antiquarian, to whom I paid for it seven guineas and an half: but to virtuosi 'tis worth any sum.

As to Tartini's musical compositions, ask Gray; I know but little in music.

But for the Academy, I am not of it, but frequently in company with it: 'tis all disjointed. Madam * * *, who, though a learned lady, has not lost her modesty and character, is extremely scandalized with the other two dames, especially with Moll Worthless, who knows no bounds. She is at rivalry with lady W. for a certain Mr. * * *, whom perhaps you knew at Oxford. If you did not, I'll tell you: he is a grave young man by temper, and a rich one by constitution; a shallow creature by nature, but a wit by the grace of our women here, whom he deals with as of old with the Oxford toasts. He fell into sentiments with my lady W. and was happy to catch her at Platonic love: but as she seldom stops there, the poor man will be frightened out of his senses, when she shall break the matter to him; for he never dreamt that her purposes were so naught. Lady Mary is so far gone, that to get him from the mouth of her antagonist, she literally took him out to dance country dances last night at a formal ball, where there was no measure kept in laughing at her old, foul, tawdry, painted, plastered personage. She played at pharaoh two or three times at princess Craon's, where she cheats horse and foot. She is really entertaining: I have been reading her works, which she lends out in manuscript, but they are too womanish: I like few of her performances. I forgot to tell you a good answer of lady Pomfret to Mr. * * *, who

asked her if she did not approve Platonic love? Lord, sir, says she, I am sure any one that knows me, never heard that I had any love but one, and there sit two proofs of it; pointing to her two daughters.

So I have given you a sketch of our employments, and answered your questions, and will with pleasure as many more as you have about you.

Adieu! Was ever such a long letter? But 'tis nothing to what I shall have to say to you. I shall scold you for never telling us any news, public or private, no deaths, marriages, or mishaps; no account of new books: Oh, you are abominable! I could find in my heart to hate you, if I did not love you so well; but we will quarrel now, that we may be the better friends when we meet: there is no danger of that, is there? Good night, whether friend or foe! I am most sincerely

Yours.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

From Florence, Nov. 1740.

CHILD, I am going to let you see your shocking proceedings with us. On my conscience, I believe 'tis three months since you wrote to either Gray or me. If you had been ill, Asheton would have said so; and if you had been dead, the ga-

zettes would have said it. If you had been angry, —but that's impossible; how can one quarrel with folks three thousand miles off? We are neither divines nor commentators, and consequently have not hated you on paper. 'Tis to show that my charity for you cannot be interrupted at this distance, that I write to you; though I have nothing to say, for 'tis a bad time for small news; and when emperors and czarinas are dying all up and down Europe, one can't pretend to tell you of any thing that happens within our sphere. Not but that we have our accidents too. If you have had a great wind in England, we have had a great water at Florence. We have been trying to set out every day, and pop upon you[1] ******. It is fortunate that we staid, for I don't know what had become of us! Yesterday, with violent rains, there came flouncing down from the mountains such a flood, that it floated the whole city. The jewellers on the Old Bridge removed their commodities, and in two hours after the bridge was cracked. The torrent broke down the quays, and drowned several coach horses, which are kept here in stables under ground. We were moated into our house all day, which is near the Arno, and had the miserable spectacles of the ruins that were washed along with the hurricane. There was a

[1] A line of the manuscript is here torn away.

cart with two oxen not quite dead, and four men in it drowned: but what was ridiculous, there came tiding along a fat hay-cock, with a hen and her eggs, and a cat. The torrent is considerably abated; but we expect terrible news from the country, especially from Pisa, which stands so much lower and nearer the sea. There is a stone here, which when the water overflows, Pisa is entirely flooded. The water rose two ells yesterday above that stone. Judge!

For this last month we have passed our time but dully; all diversions silenced on the emperor's death, and every body out of town. I have seen nothing but cards and dull pairs of cicisbeos. I have literally seen so much love and pharaoh since being here, that I believe I shall never love either again as long as I live. Then I am got into a horrid lazy way of a morning. I don't believe I should know seven o'clock in the morning again, if I was to see it. But I am returning to England, and shall grow very solemn and wise! Are you wise? Dear West, have pity on one, who have done nothing of gravity for these two years, and do laugh sometimes. We do nothing else, and have contracted such formidable ideas of the good people of England, that we are already nourishing great black eye-brows, and great black beards, and teasing our countenances into wrinkles. Then for the common talk of the times we are quite at a loss, and for the dress. You would

oblige us extremely by forwarding to us the votes of the houses, the king's speech, and the magazines; or if you had any such thing as a little book called the Foreigner's Guide through the city of London and the liberties of Westminster; or a Letter to a Freeholder; or the Political Companion: then 'twould be an infinite obligation if you would neatly band-box-up a baby dressed after the newest Temple fashion now in use at both play-houses. Alack-a-day! We shall just arrive in the tempest of elections!

As our departure depends entirely upon the weather, we cannot tell you to a day when we shall say, Dear West, how glad I am to see you!' and all the many questions and answers that we shall give and take. Would the day were come! Do but figure to yourself the journey we are to pass through first! But you can't conceive Alps, Apennines, Italian inns and postchaises. I tremble at the thoughts. They were just sufferable while new and unknown, and as we met them by the way in coming to Florence, Rome, and Naples; but they are passed, and the mountains remain! Well, write to one in the interim; direct to me addressed to monsieur Selwyn, *chez monsieur Alexandre, rüe St. Apolline à Paris.* If Mr. Alexandre is not there, the street is, and I believe that will be sufficient. Adieu, my dear child!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Florence, March 25, 1741, N. S.

DEAR HAL,

You must judge by what you feel yourself of what I feel for Selwyn's recovery, with the addition of what I have suffered from post to post. But as I find the whole town have had the same sentiments about him, (though I am sure few so strong as myself) I will not repeat what you have heard so much. I shall write to him to-night, though he knows without my telling him how very much I love him. To you, my dear Harry, I am infinitely obliged for the three successive letters you wrote me about him, which gave me double pleasure, as they shewed your attention for me at a time that you knew I must be so unhappy; and your friendship for him.

Your account of sir Robert's victory[1] was so extremely well told, that I made Gray translate it into French, and have showed it to all that could taste it, or were inquisitive on the occasion. I have received a print by this post that diverts me extremely; *the Motion.* Tell me, dear now,

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[1] On the event of Mr. Sandys's motion in the house of commons to remove sir Robert Walpole from the king's presence and councils for ever.

who made the design, and who took the likenesses; they are admirable: the lines are as good as one sees on such occasions. I wrote last post to sir Robert, to wish him joy; I hope he received my letter.

I was to have set out last Tuesday, but on Sunday came the news of the queen of Hungary being brought to bed of a son; on which occasion here will be great triumphs, operas and masquerades, which detain me for a short time.

I won't make you any excuse for sending you the following lines; you have prejudice enough for me to read with patience any of my idlenesses.[2]

My dear Harry, you enrage me with talking of another journey to Ireland; it will shock me if I don't find you at my return: pray take care and be in England.

I wait with some patience to see Dr. Middleton's Tully, as I read the greatest part of it in manuscript; though indeed that is rather a reason for my being impatient to read the rest. If Tully can receive any additional honour, Dr. Middleton is most capable of conferring it.

I receive with great pleasure any remembrances

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[2] Here follows the inscription for the neglected column in the place of St. Mark, at Florence, afterwards printed in the Fugitive Pieces.

of my lord and your sisters; I long to see all of you. Patapan[6] is so handsome that he has been named the silver fleece; and there is a new order of knighthood to be erected to his honour, in opposition to the golden. Precedents are searching, and plans drawing up for that purpose. I hear that the natives pretend to be companions, upon the authority of their dog-skin waistcoats; but a council that has been held on purpose has declared their pretensions impertinent. Patapan has lately taken wife unto him, as ugly as he is genteel, but of a very great family, being the direct heiress of Canis Scaliger, lord of Verona: which principality we design to seize à la Prussienne; that is, as soon as ever we shall have persuaded the republic of Venice, that we are the best friends they have in the world. Adieu, dear child!

Yours ever.

P. S. I left my subscriptions for Middleton's Tully with Mr. Selwyn; I won't trouble him, but I wish you would take care and get the books, if Mr. S. has kept the list.

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[6] A dog of Mr. Walpole's.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

Reggio, May 10, 1741, N.S.

Dear West,

I have received the end of your first act,[1] and now will tell you sincerely what I think of it. If I was not so pleased with the beginning as I usually am with your compositions, believe me the part of Pausanias has charmed me. There is all imaginable art joined with all requisite simplicity; and a simplicity, I think, much preferable to that in the scenes of Cleodora and Argilius. Forgive me, if I say they do not talk laconic but low English; in her, who is Persian too, there would admit more heroic. But for the whole part of Pausanias, 'tis great and well worked up, and the art that is seen seems to proceed from his head, not from the author's. As I am very desirous you should continue, so I own I wish you would improve or change the beginning: those who know you not so well as I do, would not wait with so much patience for the entrance of Pausanias. You see I am frank; and if I tell you I do not approve of the first part, you may believe me as sincere when I tell you I admire the latter extremely.

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[1] The first act, and probably all that was ever written, of a Tragedy called Pausanias, by Mr. West.

My letter has an odd date. You would not expect I should be writing in such a dirty little place as Reggio: but the fair is charming; and here come all the nobility of Lombardy, and all the broken dialects of Genoa, Milan, Venice, Bologna, &c. You never heard such a ridiculous confusion of tongues. All the morning one goes to the fair undressed, as to the walks of Tunbridge: 'tis just in that manner, with lotteries, raffles, &c. After dinner all the company return in their coaches, and make a kind of corso, with the ducal family, who go to shops, where you talk to 'em, from thence to the opera, in mask if you will, and afterwards to the ridotto. This five nights in the week. Fridays there are masquerades, and Tuesdays balls at the Rivalta, a villa of the duke's. In short, one diverts oneself. I pass most part of the opera in the duchess's box, who is extremely civil to me and extremely agreeable. A daughter of the regent's,[2] that could please him, must be so. She is not young, though still handsome, but fat; but has given up her gallantries cheerfully, and in time, and lives easily with a dull husband, two dull sisters of his, and a dull court. These two princesses are wofully ugly, old maids and rich. They might have been married often; but the old duke was whimsical and proud, and never

[2] Philip duke of Orleans.

would consent to any match for them, but left them much money, and pensions of three thousand pounds a year a-piece. There was a design to have given the eldest to this king of Spain, and the duke was to have had the Parmesan princess; so that now he would have had Parma and Placentia, joined to Modena, Reggio, Mirandola, and Massa. But there being a prince of Asturias, the old duke Rinaldo broke off the match, and said his daughter's children should not be younger brothers: and so they mope old virgins.

I am going from hence to Venice, in a fright lest there be a war with France, and then I must drag myself through Germany. We have had an imperfect account of a sea-fight in America; but we are so out of the way, that one can't be sure of it. Which way soever I return, I shall be soon in England, and there you will find me again

As much as ever yours.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

London, 1741.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

BEFORE I thank you for myself, I must thank you for that excessive good nature you showed in writing to poor Gray. I am less impatient to see you, as I find you are not the least altered, but

have the same tender friendly temper you always had. I wanted much to see if you were still the same—but you are.

Don't think of coming before your brother; he is too good to be left for any one living: besides, if it is possible, I will see you in the country. Don't reproach me, and think nothing could draw me into the country: impatience to see a few friends has drawn me out of Italy; and Italy, Harry, is pleasanter than London. As I do not love living *en famille* so much as you (but then indeed my family is not like yours), I am hurried about getting myself a house; for I have so long lived single, that I do not much take to being confined with *****

You won't find me much altered, I believe; at least, outwardly. I am not grown a bit shorter, or a bit fatter, but am just the same long lean creature as usual. Then I talk no French, but to my footman; nor Italian, but to myself. What inward alterations may have happened to me, you will discover best; for you know 'tis said, one never knows that one's self. I will answer, that that part of it that belongs to you, has not suffered the least change—I took care of that.

For virtù, I have a little to entertain you: it is my sole pleasure.—I am neither young enough nor old enough to be in love.

My dear Harry, will you take care and make

my compliments to that charming lady Conway,[1] who I hear is so charming, and to miss Jenny, who I know is so? As for miss Anne,[2] and her love *as far as it is decent;* tell her, decency is out of the question between us, that I love her without any restriction. I settled it yesterday with miss Conway, that you three are brothers and sister to me, and that if you had been so, I could not love you better. I have so many cousins, and uncles and aunts, and bloods that grow in Norfolk, that if I had portioned out my affections to them, as they say I should, what a modicum would have fallen to each!—So, to avoid fractions, I love my family in you three, their representatives.[3]

Adieu, my dear Harry! Direct to me at Downing-street. Good bye!

Yours ever.

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[1] Isabella Fitzroy, daughter of Charles duke of Grafton.

[2] Miss Anne Conway, youngest sister of Henry Seymour Conway.

[3] They were first cousins by the mother's side; Francis the first lord Conway having married Charlotte, eldest daughter of John Shorter of Bybrook in Kent, sister to Catherine Shorter lady Walpole.

To RICHARD WEST, Esq.

London, May 4, 1742.

Dear West,

Your letter made me quite melancholy, till I came to the postscript of fine weather. Your so suddenly finding the benefit of it, makes me trust you will entirely recover your health and spirits with the warm season: nobody wishes it more than I: nobody has more reason, as few have known you so long.

Don't be afraid of your letters being dull. I don't deserve to be called your friend, if I were impatient at hearing your complaints. I do not desire you to suppress them till their causes cease; nor should I expect you to write cheerfully while you are ill. I never design to write any man's life as a stoic, and consequently should not desire him to furnish me with opportunities of assuring posterity what pains he took not to show any pain.

If you did amuse yourself with writing any thing in poetry, you know how pleased I should be to see it; but for encouraging you to it, d'ye see, 'tis an age most unpoetical! 'Tis even a test of wit, to dislike poetry; and though Pope has half a dozen old friends that he has preserved from the taste of last century, yet I assure you, the generality of readers are more diverted with any paltry prose answer to old Marlborough's Secret

history of queen Mary's robes. I do not think an author would be universally commended for any production in verse, unless it were an ode to the secret committee, with rhymes of liberty and property, nation and administration.

Wit itself is monopolized by politics; no laugh but would be ridiculous if it were not on one side or t'other. Thus Sandys thinks he has spoken an epigram, when he crinkles up his nose, and lays a smart accent on *ways and means*.

We may indeed hope a little better now to the declining arts. The reconciliation between the royalties is finished, and 50,000*l.* a year more added to the heir apparent's revenue. He will have money now to tune up Glover, and Thomson, and Dodsley again.

Et spes et ratio studiorum in Cæsare tantum.

Asheton is much yours. He has preached twice at Somerset-chapel with the greatest applause. I do not mind his pleasing the generality, for you know they ran as much after Whitfield as they could after Tillotson; and I do not doubt but St. Jude converted as many honourable women as St. Paul. But I am sure you would approve his compositions, and admire them still more when you heard him deliver them. He will write to you himself next post, but is not mad enough with his fame to write you a sermon. Adieu, dear child! Write me the progress of

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your recovery,[1] and believe it will give me a sincere pleasure; for I am

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, July 20, 1744.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

I FEEL that I have so much to say to you, that I foresee there will be but little method in my letter; but if upon the whole you see my meaning, and the depth of my friendship for you, I am content.

It was most agreeable to me to receive a letter of confidence from you, at the time I expected a very different one from you; though, by the date of your last, I perceive you had not then received some letters, which though I did not see I must call simple, as they could only tend to make you uneasy for some months. I should not have thought of communicating a quarrel to you at this distance; and I don't conceive the sort of friendship of those that thought it necessary. When I heard it had been wrote to you, I thought it right

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[1] Mr. West died in less than a month from the date of this letter, in the 26th year of his age.

to myself to give you my account of it—but, by your brother's desire, suppressed my letter, and left it to be explained by him, who wrote to you so sensibly on it, that I shall say no more; but that I think myself so ill used, that it will prevent my giving you thoroughly the advice you ask of me; for how can I be sure that my resentment might not make me see in a stronger light the reasons for your breaking off an affair,[2] which you know before I never approved?

You know my temper is so open to any body I love, that I must be happy at seeing you lay aside a reserve with me, which is the only point that ever made me dissatisfied with you. That silence of yours has, perhaps, been one of the chief reasons that has always prevented my saying much to you on a topic which I saw was so near your heart. Indeed, its being so near was another reason; for how could I expect you would take my advice, even if you bore it? But, my dearest Harry, how can I advise you now? Is it not gone too far for me to expect you should keep any resolution about it; especially in absence, which must be destroyed the moment you meet again? And if you ever should marry and be happy, won't you reproach me with having tried to hinder it?—I think you as just, and honest, as I think

[2] This was an early attachment of Mr. Conway's.

any man living. But any man living in that circumstance would think I had been prompted by private reasons. I see as strongly as you can, all the arguments for your breaking off; but indeed the alteration of your fortune adds very little strength to what they had before. You never had fortune enough to make such a step at all prudent: she loved you enough to be content with that; I can't believe this change will alter her sentiments, for I must do her the justice to say, that 'tis plain she preferred you with nothing to all the world. I could talk on upon this head; but I will only leave you to consider, without advising you on either side, these two things: whether you think it honester to break off with her after such engagements as yours (how strong I don't know), after her refusing very good matches for you, and show her that she must think of making her fortune; or whether you will wait with her till some amendment in your fortune can put it in your power to marry her.

My dearest Harry, you must see why I don't care to say more on this head. My wishing it could be right for you to break off with her (for, without it is right, I would not have you on any account take such a step) makes it impossible for me to advise it; and therefore I am sure you will forgive my declining an act of friendship, which your having put in my power gives me the greatest satisfaction. But it does put something else in

my power, which I am sure nothing can make me decline, and for which I have long wanted an opportunity. Nothing could prevent my being unhappy at the smallness of your fortune, but its throwing it into my way to offer you to share mine. As mine is so precarious, by depending on so bad a constitution, I can only offer you the immediate use of it. I do that most sincerely. My places still (though my lord Walpole has cut off three hundred pounds a year to save himself the trouble of signing his name ten times for once) bring me in near two thousand pounds a year. I have no debts, no connections; indeed no way to dispose of it particularly. By living with my father, I have little real use for a quarter of it. I have always flung it away all in the most idle manner. But, my dear Harry, idle as I am, and thoughtless, I have sense enough to have real pleasure in denying myself bawbles, and in saving a very good income to make a man happy for whom I have a just esteem and most sincere friendship. I know the difficulties any gentleman and man of spirit must struggle with, even in having such an offer made him, much more in accepting it. I hope you will allow there are some in making it. But hear me: if there is any such thing as friendship in the world, these are the opportunities of exerting it, and it can't be exerted without 'tis accepted. I must talk of myself to prove to you that it will be right for you to accept it. I

am sensible of having more follies and weaknesses and fewer real good qualities than most men. I sometimes reflect on this, though I own too seldom. I always want to begin acting like a man and a sensible one, which I think I might be if I would. Can I begin better, than by taking care of my fortune for one I love? You have seen (I have seen you have) that I am fickle, and foolishly fond of twenty new people: but I don't really love them: I have always loved you constantly: I am willing to convince you and the world, what I have always told you, that I loved you better than any body. If I ever felt much for any thing, which I know may be questioned, it was certainly for my mother. I look on you as my nearest relation by her, and think I can never do enough to show my gratitude and affection to her. For these reasons, don't deny me what I have set my heart on—the making your fortune easy to you.* * * * * * *

[The rest of this letter is wanting.]

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Houghton, Oct. 6, 1744.

My dearest Harry,

My lord[1] bids me tell you how much he is obliged to you for your letter, and hopes you will accept my answer for his. I'll tell you what, we shall both be obliged to you if you will inclose a magnifying glass in your next letters; for your two last were in so diminutive a character, that we were forced to employ all Mrs. Leneve's spectacles, besides an ancient family reading-glass with which my grandfather used to begin the psalm, to discover what you said to us. Besides this, I have a piece of news for you: sir Robert Walpole, when he was made earl of Orford, left the ministry, and with it the palace in Downing-street; as numbers of people found out three years ago, who not having your integrity were quick in perceiving the change of his situation. Your letter was full as honest as you; for, though directed to Downing-street, it would not, as other letters would have done, address itself to the present possessor. Do but think if it had! The smallness of the hand would have immediately struck my lord Sandys[2]

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[1] Sir Robert Walpole, first earl of Orford.

[2] Samuel Sandys, made chancellor of the exchequer on the

with the idea of a plot; for what he could not read at first sight, he would certainly have concluded must be cypher.

I march next week towards London, and have already begun to send my heavy artillery before me, consisting of half a dozen books and part of my linen; my light horse commanded by Patapan follows this day se'nnight. A detachment of hussars surprised an old bitch fox yesterday morning, who had lost a leg in a former engagement; and then having received advice of another litter being advanced as far as Dasingham, lord Walpole commanded captain Riley's horse with a strong party of fox-hounds to overtake them: but on the approach of our troops the enemy stole off, and are now encamped at Sechford common, whither we every hour expect orders to pursue them.

My dear Harry, this is all I have to tell you, and to my great joy, which you must forgive me, is full as memorable as any part of the Flanders campaign.[3] I do not desire to have you engaged in the least more glory than you have been. I should not love the remainder of you the least better for your having lost an arm or a leg; and have as full persuasion of your courage as if you

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resignation of sir Robert Walpole in February 1741, and afterwards created lord Sandys.

[3] Mr. Conway was now with the allied army in Flanders.

had contributed to the slicing off twenty pair from French officers. Thank God, you have sense enough to content yourself without being a hero; though I don't quite forget your expedition a hussar-hunting the beginning of this campaign.—Pray, no more of those jaunts! I don't know any body you would oblige with a present of such game: for my part, a fragment of the oldest hussar on earth should never have a place in my museum; they are not antique enough: and for a live one, I must tell you I like my racoon infinitely better.

Adieu, my dear Harry! I long to see you.—You will easily believe, the thought I have of being particularly well with you is a vast addition to my impatience; though you know it is nothing new to me to be overjoyed at your return.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 18, 1745.

Dear George,

I am very sorry to renew our correspondence upon so melancholy a circumstance, but when you have lost so near a friend as your brother,[1]

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1 Lieut. colonel Edward Montagu, killed at the battle of Fontenoy.

'tis sure the duty of all your other friends to endeavour to alleviate your loss, and offer all the increase of affection that is possible, to compensate it. This I do most heartily; I wish I could most effectually.

You will always find in me, dear sir, the utmost inclination to be of service to you; and let me beg that you will remember your promise of writing to me. As I am so much in town and in the world, I flatter myself with having generally something to tell you that may make my letters agreeable in the country: You, any where, make yours charming.

Be so good to say any thing you think proper from me to your sisters, and believe me,

Dear George,

Yours most sincerely.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 25, 1745.

DEAR GEORGE,

I DON'T write to you now so much to answer your letter as to promote your diversion, which I am as much obliged to you for consulting me about, at least as much as about an affair of honour, or your marriage, or any other important transaction; any one of which you might possibly dis-

like more than diverting yourself. For my part I shall give you my advice on this point with as much reflection, as I should, if it were necessary for me, like a true friend, to counsel you to displease yourself.

You propose making a visit at Englefield Green, and ask me, if I think it right? Extremely so. I have heard 'tis a very pretty place. You love a jaunt—have a pretty chaise, I believe, and I dare swear very easy; in all probability you will have a fine evening too: and added to all this, the gentleman you would go to see is very agreeable and good-humoured. He has some very pretty children, and a sensible, learned man that lives with him, one Dr. Thirlby, whom, I believe, you know. The master of the house plays extremely well on the bass-viol, and has generally other musical people with him. He knows a good deal of the private history of a late ministry, and, my dear George, you love memoires. Indeed, as to personal acquaintance with any of the court beauties, I can't say you will find your account in him; but to make amends, he is perfectly master of all the quarrels that have been fashionably on foot about Handel, and can give you a very perfect account of all the modern rival painters. In short, you may pass a very agreeable day with him; and if he does but take to you, as I can't doubt, who know you both, you will contract a great friendship with him, which he will preserve with the greatest warmth and partiality.

In short, I can think of no reason in the world against your going there but one: do you know his youngest brother? If you happen to be so unlucky, I can't flatter you so far as to advise you to make him a visit; for there is nothing in the world the baron of Englefield has such an aversion for, as for his brother.

Your most sincere friend.

P. S. Write to me soon, for I love your letters.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, May 27, 1745.

My dear Harry,

As gloriously as you have set out, yet I despair of seeing you a perfect hero! You have none of the charming violences that are so essential to that character. You write as coolly after behaving well in a battle, as you fought in it. Can your friends flatter themselves with seeing you one day or other be the death of thousands, when you wish for peace in three weeks after your first engagement,[1] and laugh at the ambition of those men who have given you this opportunity of dis-

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[1] The battle of Fontenoy, where Mr. Conway greatly distinguished himself.

tinguishing yourself? With the person of an Orondates, and the courage, you have all the compassion, the reason, and the reflection, of one that never read a romance. Can one ever hope you will make a figure, when you only fight because it was right you should, and not because you hated the French, or loved destroying mankind? This is so un-English, or so un-heroic, that I despair of you!

Thank Heaven, you have one spice of madness! Your admiration of your master[2] leaves me a glimmering of hope that you will not be always so unreasonably reasonable. Do you remember the humorous lieutenant, in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, that is in love with the king? Indeed your master is not behind hand with you; you seem to have agreed to puff one another.

If you are all acting up to the strictest rules of war and chivalry in Flanders, we are not less scrupulous on this side the water in fulfilling all the duties of the same order. The day the young volunteer departed for the army (unluckily indeed it was after the battle), his tender mother Sisygambis, and the beautiful Statira, a lady formerly known in your history by the name of Artemisia, from her cutting off her hair on your ab-

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2 William duke of Cumberland, to whom Mr. Conway was aide-du-camp.

sence, were so afflicted and so inseparable, that they made a party together to *Mr. Graham's*[3] (you may read *Lapis* if you please) to be blooded. It was settled that this was a more precious way of expressing concern than shaving the head, which has been known to be attended with false locks the next day.

For the other princess you wot of, who is not entirely so tall as the former, nor so evidently descended from a line of monarchs—I don't hear her talk of retiring. At present she is employed in buying up all the nosegays in Covent Garden, and laurel-leaves at the pastry-cooks', to weave chaplets for the return of her hero. Who that is, I don't pretend to know or guess. All I know is, that in this age retirement is not one of the fashionable expressions of passion.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, June 25, 1745.

DEAR GEORGE,

I HAVE been near three weeks in Essex at Mr. Rigby's, and had left your direction behind me,

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[3] A celebrated apothecary in Pall-mall.

and could not write to you. 'Tis the charmingest place by nature and the most trumpery by art that ever I saw. The house stands on a high hill on an arm of the sea, which winds itself before two sides of the house. On the right and left, at the very foot of this hill, lie two towns; the one of market quality, and the other with a wharf where ships come up. This last was to have a church, but by a lucky want of religion in the inhabitants, who would not contribute to building a steeple, it remains an absolute antique temple, with a portico on the very strand. Cross this arm of the sea you see six churches and charming woody hills in Suffolk. All this parent nature did for this place; but its godfathers and godmothers, I believe, promised it should renounce all the pomps and vanities of this world, for they have patched up a square house, full of windows, low rooms, and thin walls; piled up walls wherever there was a glimpse of prospect; planted avenues that go no where, and dug fish ponds where there should be avenues. We had very bad weather the whole time I was there, but however I rode about and sailed, not having the same apprehensions of catching cold that Mrs. Kerwood had once at Chelsea, when I persuaded her not to go home by water, because it would be damp after rain.

The town is not quite empty yet. My lady

Fitzwalter, lady Betty Germain,[1] lady Granville,[2] and the dowager Strafford, have their At-home's, and amass company. Lady Brown has done with her Sundays, for she is changing her house into Upper Brook Street. In the mean time, she goes to Knightsbridge, and sir Robert to the woman he keeps at Scarborough: Winnington goes on with the Frasi, so my lady Townsend is obliged only to lie of people. You have heard of the disgrace of the Archibald; and that in future scandal she must only be ranked with the lady Elizabeth Lucy and madam Lucy Walters, instead of being historically noble among the Clevelands, Portsmouths, and Yarmouths. 'Tis said, Miss Granville has the reversion of her coronet; others say, she won't accept the patent.

Your friend Jemmy Lumley,—I beg pardon, I mean your kin, is not he? I am sure he is not your friend;—well, he has had an assembly, and he would write all the cards himself, and every one of them was to desire *he's* company and *she's* company with other pieces of curious orthography. Adieu, dear George; I wish you a merry

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1 Second daughter of the earl of Berkley, and married to sir John Germain.

2 Daughter of Thomas, earl of Pomfret. She was lord Granville's second wife.

farm, as the children say at Vauxhall. My compliments to your sisters.

Yours ever.

TO THE HON H S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, July 1, 1745.

MY DEAR HARRY,

IF it were not for that one slight inconvenience, that I should probably be dead now, I should have liked much better to have lived in the last war than in this; I mean as to the pleasantness of writing letters. Two or three battles won, two or three towns taken, in a summer, were pretty objects to keep up the liveliness of a correspondence. But now it hurts one's dignity to be talking of English and French armies, at the first period of our history in which the tables are turned. After having learnt to spell out of the reigns of Edward the third and Harry the fifth, and begun lisping with Agincourt and Cressy, one uses one's self but awkwardly to the sounds of Tournay and Fontenoy. I don't like foreseeing the time so near, when all the young orators in parliament will be haranguing out of Demosthenes upon the imminent danger we are in from the overgrown power of king Philip. As becoming as all that public spirit will be, which to be sure will now

come forth, I can't but think we were at least as happy and as great when all the young Pitts and Lytteltons were pelting oratory at my father for rolling out a twenty years peace, and not envying the trophies which he passed by every day in Westminster-hall. But one must not repine; rather reflect on the glories which they have drove the nation headlong into. One must think all our distresses and dangers well laid out, when they have purchased us Glover's[1] Oration for the merchants, the admiralty for the duke of Bedford, and the reversion of secretary at war for Pitt, which he will certainly have, unless the French king should happen to have the nomination; and then I fear, as much obliged as that court is to my lord Cobham and his nephews, they would be so partial as to prefer some illiterate nephew of cardinal Tencin's, who never heard of Leonidas or the Hanover troops.

With all these reflections, as I love to make myself easy, especially politically, I comfort myself with what St. Evremond (a favourite philosopher of mine, for he thought what he liked, not liked what he thought) said in defence of cardinal Mazarin, when he was reproached with neglecting the good of the kingdom that he might engross the riches of it: "Well, let him get all the

[1] The author of Leonidas.

riches, and then he will think of the good of the kingdom, for it will all be his own." Let the French but have England, and they won't want to conquer it. We may possibly contract the French spirit of being supremely content with the glory of our monarch, and then — why then it will be the first time we ever were contented yet.

We hear of nothing but your retiring,[2] and of Dutch treachery: in short, 'tis an ugly scene!

I know of no home news but the commencement of the gaming act, for which they are to put up a scutcheon at White's for the death of play; and the death of Winnington's wife, which may be an unlucky event for my lady ——. As he has no children, he will certainly marry again; and who will give him their daughter, unless he breaks off that affair, which I believe he will now very willingly make a marriage article? We want him to take lady Charlotte Fermor. She was always his beauty, and has so many charming qualities, that she would make any body happy. He will make a good husband; for he is excessively good-natured, and was much better to that strange wife than he cared to own.

You wondered at my journey to Houghton; now wonder more, for I am going to Mount Edgecumbe. Now my summers are in my own

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[2] Mr. Conway was still with the army in Flanders.

hands, and I am not obliged to pass great part of them in Norfolk, I find it is not so very terrible to dispose of them up and down. In about three weeks I shall set out, and see Wilton and Doddington's in my way. Dear Harry, do but get a victory, and I will let off every cannon at Plymouth; reserving two, till I hear particularly that you have killed two more Frenchmen with your own hand.[3] Lady Mary[4] sends you her compliments; she is going to pass a week with miss Townshend[5] at Muffits; I don't think you will be forgot. Your sister Anne has got a new distemper, which she says feels like something *jumping* in her. You know my style on such an occasion, and may be sure I have not spared this distemper. Adieu!

Yours ever.

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[3] Alluding to Mr. Conway's having been engaged with two French grenadiers at once in the battle of Fontenoy.

[4] Lady Mary Walpole, youngest daughter of sir R. Walpole, afterwards married to Charles Churchill, esq.

[5] Daughter of Charles viscount Townshend, afterwards married to Edward Cornwallis brother to earl Cornwallis, and groom of the bed-chamber to the king.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, July 13, 1745.

Dear George,

We are all *Cabob'd* and *Cacofagoed*, as my lord Denbigh says. We, who formerly you know, could any one of us beat three Frenchmen, are now so degenerated that three Frenchmen[1] can evidently beat one Englishman. Our army is running away, all that is left to run, for half of it is picked up by three or four hundred at a time. In short, we must step out of the high pantoufles that were made by those cunning shoemakers at Poitiers and Ramillies, and go clumping about perhaps in wooden ones. My lady Hervey, who you know doats upon every thing French, is charmed with the hopes of these new shoes, and has already bespoke herself a pair of pigeon wood. How did the tapestry at Blenheim look? Did it glow with victory, or did all our glories look overcast?

I remember a very admired sentence in one of my lord Chesterfield's speeches, when he was haranguing for this war; with a most rhetorical transition, he turned to the tapestry in the House

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[1] Alluding to the success of the French army in Flanders, under the command of mareschal Saxe.

of Lords, and said, with a sigh, he feared there were no historical looms at work now! Indeed, we have reason to bless the good patriots, who have been for employing our manufactures so historically. The countess of that wise earl, with whose two expressive words I began this letter, says, she is very happy now that my lord had never a place upon the coalition, for then all this bad situation of our affairs would have been laid upon him.

Now I have been talking of remarkable periods in our annals, I must tell you what my lord Baltimore thinks one:—He said to the prince t'other day. "Sir, your royal highness's marriage will be an *area* in English history."

If it were not for the life that is put into the town now and then by very bad news from abroad, one should be quite stupified. There is nobody left but two or three solitary regents; and they are always whisking backwards and forwards to their villas; and about a dozen antediluvian dowagers, whose carcasses have miraculously resisted the wet, and who every Saturday compose a very reverend catacomb at my old lady Strafford's. She does not take money at the door for shewing them, but you pay twelvepence a-piece under the denomination of card money. Wit and beauty indeed remain in the persons of lady Townshend and lady Caroline Fitzroy; but such is the want of taste of this age, that the former is very often

forced to wrap up her wit in plain English before it can be understood; and the latter is almost as often obliged to have recourse to the same artifices to make her charms be taken notice of.

Of beauty I can tell you an admirable story: one Mrs. Comyns, an elderly gentlewoman, has lately taken a house in St. James's-street: some young gentlemen went there t'other night:—"Well, Mrs. Comyns, I hope there won't be the same disturbances here that were at your other house in Air-street."—"Lord, sir, I never had any disturbances there: mine was as quiet a house as any in the neighbourhood, and a great deal of good company came to me: it was only the ladies of quality that envied me."—"Envied you! why your house was pulled down about your ears."—"Oh dear sir! don't you know how that happened?"—"No, pray how?"—"Why, dear sir, it was my lady * * * * who gave ten guineas to the mob to demolish my house, because her ladyship fancied I got women for colonel Conway.

My dear George, don't you delight in this story? If poor Harry[2] comes back from Flanders, I intend to have infinite fun with his prudery about this anecdote, which is full as good as if it was true. I beg you will visit Mrs. Comyns when you come to town: she has infinite humour.

Adieu, dear George,

Yours ever.

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[2] The honourable Henry Seymour Conway.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

DEAR GEORGE,

I CANNOT help thinking you laugh at me when you say such very civil things of my letters, and yet coming from you, I would fain not have it all flattery:

> So much the more, as from a little elf
> I've had a high opinion of myself;
> Though sickly, slender, and not large of limb.

With this modest prepossession, you may be sure I like to have you commend me, whom, after I have done with myself, I admire of all men living. I only beg that you will commend me no more; it is very ruinous; and praise, like other debts, ceases to be due on being paid. One comfort indeed is, that it is as seldom paid as other debts.

I have been very fortunate lately; I have met with an extreme good print of Monsieur de Grignan; I am persuaded very like, and then it has his *Touffe ebouriffée;* I don't indeed know what that was, but I am sure it is in the print. None of the critics could ever make out what Livy's Patavinity is, though they are all confident it is in his writings. I have heard within these few days, what, for your sake, I wish I could have told you sooner, that there is in Belleisle's suite the Abbé

Perrin, who published Madame Sévigné's letters, and who has the originals in his hands; how one should have liked to have known him! The marshal was privately in London last Friday. He is entertained to-day at Hampton court by the duke of Grafton. Don't you believe it was to settle the binding the scarlet thread in the window, when the French shall come in unto the land to possess it? I don't at all wonder at any shrewd observations the marshal has made on our situation. The bringing him here at all—the sending him away now—in short the whole series of our conduct convinces me, that we shall soon see as silent a change as that in the rehearsal of king Usher and king Physician. It may well be so, when the disposition of the drama is in the hands of the duke of Newcastle. Those hands that are always groping, and sprawling, and fluttering, and hurrying on the rest of his precipitate person; but there is no describing them but as Monsieur Courcelle, a French prisoner, did t'other day. *Je ne sçais pas, dit il, je ne sçaurois m'exprimer, mais il a un certain tatillonage.* If one could conceive a dead body hung in chains always wanting to be hung somewhere else, one should have a comparative idea of him.

For my own part I comfort myself with the humane reflection of the Irishman in the ship that was on fire—I am but a passenger! If I were not so indolent, I think I should rather put in prac-

tice the late dutchess of Bolton's geographical resolution of going to China, when Whiston told her the world would be burnt in three years. Have you any philosophy? Tell me what you think. It is quite the fashion to talk of the French coming here. Nobody sees it in any other light, but as a thing to be talked of—not to be precautioned against. Don't you remember a report of the plague being in the city, and every body went to the house where it was to see it? You see I laugh about it, for I would not for the world be so unenglished as to do otherwise. I am persuaded, that, when count Saxe with ten thousand men is within a day's march of London, people will be hiring windows at Charing-cross and Cheap-side to see them pass by. 'Tis our characteristic to take dangers for sights, and evils for curiosities.

Adieu, dear George, I am laying in scraps of Cato against it may be necessary to take leave of one's correspondents *à la Romaine*, and before the play itself is suppressed by a *lettre de cachet* to the booksellers.

Yours ever.

P. S. Lord, 'tis the first of August, 1745, a holiday, that is going to be turned out of the almanack!

To the Rev. Mr. BIRCH.

Woolterton, 15th [Aug.] 1745.

Sir,

When I was lately in town I was favoured with yours of the 21st past, but my stay there was so short, and my hurry so great, that I had not time to see you as I intended: as I am persuaded that nobody is more capable than yourself, in all respects, to set his late majesty's reign in a true light, I am sure there is nobody to whom I would more readily give my assistance, as far as I am able; but, as I have never wrote any thing in a historical way, have now and then suggested hints to others as they were writing, and never published but two pamphlets—one was to justify the taking and keeping in our pay the 12,000 Hessians, of which I have forgot the title, and have it not in the country; the other was published about two years since, entitled "The Interest of Great Britain steadily Pursued," in answer to the pamphlets about the Hanover forces: I can't tell in what manner, nor on what heads to answer your desire, which is conceived in such general terms: if you could point out some stated times, and some particular facts, and I had before me a sketch of your narration, I perhaps might be able to suggest or explain some things that are come but imperfectly to your knowledge, and some an-

ecdotes might occur to my memory relating to domestic and foreign affairs, that are curious, and were never yet made public, and perhaps not proper to be published yet, particularly with regard to the alteration of the ministry in 1717, by the removal of my relation, and the measures that were pursued in consequence of that alteration; but in order to do this, or any thing else for your service, requires a personal conversation with you, in which I should be ready to let you know what might occur to me. I am most truly,

Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Sept. 17, 1745.

DEAR GEORGE,

How could you ask me such a question, as whether I should be glad to see you? Have you a mind I should make you a formal speech, with honour, and pleasure, and satisfaction, &c.? I will not, for that would be telling you I should not be glad. However do come soon, if you should be glad to see me, for we, I mean we old folks that came over with the prince of Orange in eighty-eight, have had notice to remove by Christmas-day. The moment I have smugged up a

closet or a dressing-room, I have always warning given me that my lease is out. Four years ago I was mightily at my ease in Downing-street, and then the good woman, Sandys, took my lodgings over my head, and was in such a hurry to junket her neighbours, that I had scarce time allowed me to wrap my old china in a little hay. Now comes the pretender's boy, and promises all my comfortable apartments in the Exchequer and Custom-house to some forlorn Irish peer, who chuses to remove his pride and poverty out of some large old unfurnished gallery at St. Germain's. Why really Mr. Montagu this is not pleasant; I shall wonderfully dislike being a loyal sufferer in a thread-bare coat, and shivering in an anti-chamber at Hanover, or reduced to teach Latin and English to the young princes at Copenhagen. The dowager Strafford has already written cards for my lady Nithisdale, my lady Tullibardine, the dutchess of Perth and Berwick, and twenty more revived peeresses to invite them to play at whisk, Monday three months: for your part, you will divert yourself with their old taffetys, and tarnished slippers, and their awkwardness, the first day they go to court in shifts and clean linen. Will you ever write to me at my garret at Herenhausen! I will give you a faithful account of all the promising speeches that prince George and prince Edward make whenever they have a new sword, and intend to reconquer England.

At least write to me, while you may with acts of parliament on your side: but I hope you are coming. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 22, 1746.

Dear George,

After all your goodness to me, don't be angry that I am glad I am got into brave old London again: though my cats don't pur like Goldwin, yet one of them has as good a heart as old Reynolds, and the tranquillity of my own closet makes me some amends for the loss of the library and *toute la belle compagnie celestine*. I don't know whether that expression will do for the azure ceilings; but I found it at my finger's ends, and so it slipped through my pen. We called at Langley,[1] but did not like it, nor the Grecian temple at all; it is by no means gracious.

I forgot to take your orders about your poultry; the partlets have not laid since I went, for little chanticleer

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[1] A seat of the duke of Marlborough.

Is true to love, and all for recreation,
And does not mind the work of propagation.

But I trust you will come yourself in a few days, and then you may settle their route.

I am got deep into the Sidney papers: there are old wills full of bequeathed *owches* and *goblets with fair enamel*, that will delight you; and there is a little pamphlet of sir Philip Sidney's in defence of his uncle Leicester, that gives me a much better opinion of his parts than his dolorous Arcadia, though it almost recommended him to the crown of Poland; at least I have never been able to discover what other great merit he had. In this little tract he is very vehement in clearing up the honour of his lineage; I don't think he could have been warmer about his family, if he had been of the blood of the *Cues*.[2] I have diverted myself with reflecting, how it would have entertained the town a few years ago, if my cousin Richard Hammond had wrote a treatise to clear up my father's pedigree, when the Craftsman used to treat him so roundly with being Nobody's son. Adieu! dear George!

Yours ever,

THE GRANDSON OF NOBODY.

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[2] Mr. Montagu used to call his own family the Cues.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, June 5, 1746.

DEAR GEORGE,

You may perhaps fancy that you are very happy in the country, and that because you commend every thing you see, you like every thing: you may fancy that London is a desert, and *that grass grows now where Troy stood;* but it does not, except just before my lord Bath's door, whom nobody will visit. So far from being empty, and dull, and dusty, the town is full of people, full of water, for it has rained this week, and as gay as a new German prince must make any place. Why, it rains princes: though some people are disappointed of the arrival of the pretender, yet the duke[1] is just coming, and the prince of Hesse come. He is tall, lusty, and handsome; extremely like lord Elcho in person, and to Mr. Hussey,[2] in what entitles him more to his freedom in Ireland, than the resemblance of the former does to Scotland. By seeing him with the prince of Wales, people think he looks stupid; but I dare say in his own country he is reckoned very lively, for though he don't speak much, he opens his

[1] William duke of Cumberland, third son of George II.

[2] Edward Hussey, afterwards earl of Beaulieu.

mouth very often. The king has given him a fine sword, and the prince a ball. He dined with the former the first day, and since with the great officers. Monday he went to Ranelagh, and supped in the house; Tuesday at the opera he sat with his court in the box on the stage next the prince, and went into theirs to see the last dance, and after it was over to the Venetian embassadress, who is the only woman he has yet noticed. To-night there is a masquerade at Ranelagh for him; a play at Covent-garden on Monday, and a ridotto at the Haymarket; and then he is to go. His amours are generally very humble, and very frequent; for he does not much affect our daughter. A little apt to be boisterous when he has drank. I have not heard, but I hope he was not rampant last night with lady Middlesex or Charlotte Dives. Men go to see him in the morning, before he goes to see the lions.

The talk of peace is blown over; nine or ten battalions were ordered for Flanders the day before yesterday, but they are again countermanded; and the operations of this campaign again likely to be confined within the precincts of Covent-garden, where the army surgeons give constant attendance. Major Johnson commands (I can't call it) the corps de *reserve* in Grosvenor-street. I wish you had seen the goddess of those purlieus with him t'other night at Ranelagh; you

would have sworn it had been the divine Cucumber in person.

The fame of the Violetta[9] increases daily; the sister countesses of Burlington and Talbot exert all their stores of sullen partiality in competition for her: the former visits her, and is having her picture, and carries her to Chiswick; and she sups at lady Carlisle's, and lies—indeed I have not heard where, but I know not at * * * House, where she is in great disgrace, for not going once or twice a week to take lessons of Denoyer, as he bid her: you know, that is politics in a court where dancing masters are ministers.

Adieu, dear George: my compliments to all at the farm. Your cocks and hens would write to you but they are dressing in haste for the masquerade: mind, I don't say that Asheton is doing any thing like that; but he is putting on an odd sort of a black gown: but, as Di Bertie says on her message cards, *mum for that.*

Yours ever.

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[9] Mrs. Garrick.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, June 12, 1746.

My dear George,

Don't commend me; you don't know what hurt it will do me; you will make me a pains-taking man, and I had rather be dull without any trouble. From partiality to me you won't allow my letters to be letters. If you have a mind I should write you news, don't make me think about it; I shall be so long turning my periods, that what I tell you will cease to be news.

The prince of Hesse had a most ridiculous tumble t'other night at the opera; they had not pegged up his box tight after the ridotto, and down he came on all four; G. Selwyn says he carried it off with an *unembarrassed* countenance. He was to go this morning; I don't know whether he did or not. The duke is expected to-night by all the tallow candles and faggots in town.

Lady Caroline Fitzroy's match is settled to the consent of all parties; they are taking lady Abergavenny's house in Brook-street; the Fairy Cucumber houses all lady Caroline's out-pensioners; Mr. Montgommery is now on half-pay with her. Her major Johnstone is chosen at White's, to the great terror of the society. When he was introduced, sir Ch. Williams presented Dick Edge-

cumbe[1] to him, and said, "I have three favours to beg of you for Mr. Edgecumbe: the first is that you would not lie with Mrs. Day; the second, that you would not poison his cards; the third, that you would not kill him;" the fool answered gravely, "Indeed I will not."

The Good has borrowed old Bowman's house in Kent, and is retiring thither for six weeks; I tell her, she has lived so rakish a life, that she is obliged to go and take up. I hope you don't know any more of it, and that major Montagu is not to cross the country to her. There—I think you can't commend me for this letter; it shall not even have the merit of being long. My compliments to all your contented family.

Yours ever.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, that lord Lonsdale had summoned the peers to-day to address the king not to send the troops abroad in the present conjuncture. I hear he made a fine speech, and the duke of Newcastle a very long one in answer, and then they rose without a division. Lord Baltimore is to bring the same motion into our house.

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[1] Richard Edgecumbe, second lord Edgecumbe.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, June 17, 1746.

DEAR GEORGE,

I WROTE to you on Friday night as soon as I could, after receiving your letter, with a list of the regiments to go abroad; one of which, I hear since, is your brother's. I am extremely sorry it is his fortune, as I know the distress it will occasion in your family.

For the politics, which you enquire after, and which may have given motion to this step, I can give you no satisfactory answer. I have heard that it is in consequence of an impertinent letter, sent over by Van Hoey in favour of the rebels, though at the same time I hear we are making steps towards a peace. There centre all my politics, all in peace. Whatever your cousin may think, I am neither busy about what does happen, nor making parties for what may. If he knew how happy I am, his intriguing nature would envy my tranquillity more than his suspicions can make him jealous of my practices. My books, my *virtu*, and my other follies and amusements take up too much of my time to leave me much leisure to think of other people's affairs; and of all affairs, those of the public are least my concern. You

will be sorry to hear of Augustus Townshend's[1] death. I lament it extremely, not much for his sake, for I did not honour him, but for his poor sister Molly's, whose little heart, that is all tenderness, and gratitude, and friendship, will be broke with the shock. I really dread it, considering how delicate her health is. My lady T * * * has a son with him. I went to tell it her. Instead of thinking of her child's distress, she kept me half an hour with a thousand histories of lady Caroline Fitzroy and major Johnstone, and the new paymaster's *menage*, and twenty other things, nothing to me, nor to her, if she could drop the idea of the pay-office.

The serene Hessian is gone. Little Brooke is to be an earl. I went to bespeak him a Lilliputian coronet at Chenwix's.[2] Adieu! dear George.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, June 24, 1746.

DEAR GEORGE,

You have got a very bad person to tell you news, for I find I hear nothing before all the world has

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[1] Son of viscount Townshend and Dorothy, sister of sir Robert Walpole.

[2] A celebrated toy-shop.

talked it over, and done with it. Till twelve o'clock last night I knew nothing of all the kissing hands that had graced yesterday morning; Arundel, for treasurer of the chambers; Legge, and your friend Welsh Campbell, for the treasury; lord Duncannon for the Admiralty; and your cousin Halifax (who is succeeded by his predecessor in the buck hounds) for chief justice in Eyre, in the room of lord Jersey.

They talk of new earls, lord Chancellor, lord Gower, lord Brooke, and lord Clinton; but I don't know that this will be, because it is not past.

Tidings are every minute expected of a great sea-fight; Martin is got between the coast and the French fleet, which has sailed from Brest. The victory in Italy is extremely big; but as none of my friends are aid-de-camps there, I know nothing of the particulars, except that the French and Spaniards have lost ten thousand men.

All the inns about town are crowded with rebel prisoners, and people are making parties of pleasure, which you know is the English genius, to hear their trials. The Scotch, which you know is the Scotch genius, are loud in censuring the duke for his severities in the Highlands.

The great business of the town is Jack Spencer's will, who has left Althrop and the Sunderland estate in reversion to Pitt; after more obligations

and more pretended friendship for his brother, the duke, than is conceivable. The duke is in the utmost uneasiness about it; having left the drawing of the writings for the estate to his brother and his grandmother, and without having any idea that himself was cut out of the entail.

I have heard nothing of Augustus Townshend's will; my lady, who you know hated him, came from the Opera t'other night, and on pulling off her gloves, and finding her hands all black, said immediately, "My hands are guilty, but my heart is free." Another good thing she said to the dutchess of Bedford,[1] who told her the duke was wind-bound at Yarmouth, "Lord! he will hate Norfolk as much as I do."

I wish, my dear George, you could meet with any man that could copy the beauties in the castle: I did not care if it were even in Indian ink. Will you enquire? Eckardt has done your picture excellently well. What shall I do with the original? Leave it with him till you come?

Lord Bath and lord Sandys have had their pockets picked at Cuper's Gardens. I fancy it was no bad scene, the avarice and jealousy of their peeresses on their return. A terrible disgrace happened to earl Cholmondeley t'other night at Ranelagh. You know all the history of

[1] Daughter of John earl Gower.

his letters to borrow money to pay for damask for his fine room at Richmond. As he was going in, in the crowd, a woman offered him roses—"*Right damask*, my lord!" He concluded she had been put upon it. I was told, *a-propos*, a *bon-mot* on the scene in the Opera, where there is a view of his new room, and the farmer comes dancing out and shaking his purse. Somebody said there was a tradesman had unexpectedly got his money.

I think I deal in *bon-mots* to-day. I'll tell you now another, but don't print my letter in a new edition of Joe Miller's jests. The duke has given brigadier Mordaunt the Pretender's coach, on condition he rode up to London in it. "That I will, Sir," said he, "and drive till it stops of its own accord at the Cocoa Tree."

Adieu! dear George.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, July 3, 1746.

My dear George,

I wish extremely to accept your invitation, but I can't bring myself to it. If I have the pleasure of meeting lord North oftener at your house next winter, I do not know but another summer I may have courage enough to make him a visit; but I

have no notion of going to any body's house, and have the servants look on the arms of the chaise to find out one's name, and learn one's face from the Saracen's Head. You did not tell me how long you staid at Wroxton, and so I direct this thither. I have wrote one to Windsor since you left it.

The new earls have kissed hands, and keep their own titles. The world reckon earl Clinton obliged for his new honour to lord Granville, though they made the duke of Newcastle go in to ask for it.

Yesterday Mr. Hussey's friends declared his marriage with her grace of Manchester,[1] and said he was gone down to Englefield Green to take possession.

I can tell you another wedding more certain, and fifty times more extraordinary; it is lord Cooke with lady Mary Campbell, the dowager of Argyle's youngest daughter. It is all agreed, and was negociated by the countess of Gower and Leicester. I don't know why they skipped over lady Betty, who, if there were any question of beauty, is I think as well as her sister. They drew the

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[1] Isabella, eldest daughter of John duke of Montagu, married in 1723 to William, second duke of Manchester, who died in 1739. She married afterwards Edward Hussey, esq. who was created baron Beaulieu in 1762, and earl Beaulieu in 1784.

girl in to give her consent, when they first proposed it to her; but now *la Belle n'aime pas trop le Sieur Leandre.* She cries her eyes to scarlet. He has made her four visits, and is so in love that he writes to her every other day. 'Tis a strange match. After offering him to all the great lumps of gold in all the alleys of the city, they fish out a woman of quality at last with a mere twelve thousand pound. She objects his loving none of her sex but the four queens in a pack of cards, but he promises to abandon White's and both clubs for her sake.

A-propos to White's and cards, Dick Edgecumbe is shut up with the itch. The ungenerous world ascribe it to Mrs. Day: but he denies it; owning, however, that he is very well contented to have it, as nobody will venture on her. Don't you like being pleased to have the itch, as a new way to keep one's mistress to one's self?

You will be in town to be sure for the eight-and-twentieth. London will be as full as at a coronation. The whole form is settled for the trials, and they are actually building scaffolds in Westminster hall.

I have not seen poor Miss Townshend yet; she is in town, and better, but most unhappy.

Adieu! dear George.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Aug. 2, 1746.

DEAR GEORGE,

You have lost nothing by missing yesterday at the trials, but a little additional contempt for the high steward; and even that is recoverable, as his long paltry speech is to be printed, for which, and for thanks for it, lord Lincoln moved the House of Lords. Some body said to sir Charles Windham, "Oh! you don't think lord Hardwicke's speech good, because you have read lord Cowper's." "No," replied he, "but I do think it tolerable, because I heard serjeant Skinner's." Poor brave old Balmerino retracted his plea, asked pardon, and desired the lords to intercede for mercy. As he returned to the Tower, he stopped the coach at Charing-cross to buy honeyblobs, as the Scotch call gooseberries. He says he is extremely afraid lord Kilmarnock will not behave well. The duke said publicly at his levee, that the latter proposed murdering the English prisoners. His Highness was to have given Peggy Banks a ball last night, but was persuaded to defer it, as it would have rather looked like an insult on the prisoners the very day their sentence was passed. George Selwyn says that he had begged sir William Saunderson to get him the high steward's wand, after it was broke, as a

curiosity; but that he behaved so like an attorney the first day, and so like a pettyfogger the second, that he would not take it to light his fire with; I don't believe my lady Hardwicke is so high minded.

Your cousin Sandwich[1] is certainly going on an embassy to Holland. I don't know whether it is to qualify him by new dignity for the head of the admiralty, or whether (which is more agreeable to present policy) to satisfy him instead of it. I know when lord Malton,[2] who was a young earl, asked for the garter, to stop his pretensions, they made him a marquis. When lord Brooke,[3] who is likely to have ten sons, though he has none yet, asked to have his barony settled on his daughters, they refused him with an earldom; and they professed making Pitt pay-master, in order to silence the avidity of his faction.

Dear George, I am afraid I shall not be in your neighbourhood, as I promised myself. Sir Charles Williams has let his house. I wish you would one day whisk over and look at Harley house.

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[1] John the fourth earl of Sandwich, son of Edward Richard, viscount Hinchingbrook. He signed the treaty of peace at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748.

[2] Thomas Watson Wentworth, earl of Malton, created marquis of Rockingham 1746.

[3] Francis lord Brooke, created earl Brooke in 1746, and earl of Warwick in 1759.

The inclosed advertisement makes it sound pretty, though I am afraid too large for me. Do look at it impartially: don't be struck at first sight with any *brave old windows;* but be so good to enquire the rent, and if I can have it for a year, and with any furniture. I have not had time to copy out the verses, but you shall have them soon.

Adieu, with my compliments to your sisters.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Aug. 5, 1746.

DEAR GEORGE,

THOUGH I can't this week accept your invitation, I can prove to you that I am most desirous of passing my time with you, and therefore *en attendant* Harley house, if you can find me out any clean, small house in Windsor, ready furnished, that is not absolutely in the middle of the town, but near you, I should be glad to take it for three or four months. I have been about sir Robert Rich's, but they will only sell it. I am as far from guessing why they send Sandwich in embassy, as you are; and when I recollect of what various materials our late embassadors have been composed, I can only say, *ex quovis ligno fit Mercurius.* Murray has certainly been discovering, and

warrants are out, but I don't yet know who are to be their prize. I begin to think that the ministry had really no intelligence till now. I before thought they had, but durst not use it. *A-propos* to not daring; I went t'other night to look at my poor favourite Chelsea, for the little Newcastle is gone to be dipped in the sea. In one of the rooms is a bed for her duke, and a press-bed for his footman; for he never dares lie alone, and, till he was married, had always a servant sit up with him. Lady Cromartie presented her petition to the king last Sunday. He was very civil to her, but would not at all give her any hopes. She swooned away as soon as he was gone. Lord Cornwallis told me that her lord weeps every time any thing of his fate is mentioned to him. Old Balmerino keeps up his spirits to the same pitch of gaiety. In the cell at Westminster he showed lord Kilmarnock how he must lay his head; bid him not winch, lest the stroke should cut his skull or his shoulders; and advised him to bite his lips. As they were to return, he begged they might have another bottle together, as they should never meet any more till ———, and then pointed to his neck. At getting into the coach, he said to the jailer, "take care, or you will break my shins with this damned axe."

I must tell you a *bon-mot* of George Selwyn's at the trial. He saw Bethel's sharp visage looking wistfully at the rebel lords; he said, "What

a shame it is to turn her face to the prisoners till they are condemned."

If you have a mind for a true foreign idea, one of the foreign ministers said at the trial to another, "*vraiment cela est auguste.*" "*Oui,*" replied the other, "*cela est vrai, mais cela n'est pas royale.*"

I am assured that the old countess of Errol made her son lord Kilmarnock go into the rebellion on pain of disinheriting him. I don't know whether I told you that the man at the tennis-court protests he has known him dine with the man that sells pamphlets at Story's gate; "and," says he, "he would often have been glad if I would have taken him home to dinner." He was certainly so poor, that in one of his wife's intercepted letters she tells him she has plagued their steward for a fortnight for money, and can get but three shillings. Can one help pitying such distress? I am vastly softened too about Balmerino's relapse, for his pardon was only granted him to engage his brother's vote at the election of Scotch peers.

My lord chancellor has had a thousand pounds in present for his high stewardship, and has got the reversion of clerk of the crown (twelve hundred a-year) for his second son. What a long time it will be before his posterity are drove into rebellion for want like lord Kilmarnock.

The duke gave his ball last night to Peggy

Banks at Vauxhall. It was to pique my lady Rochford in return for the prince of Hesse. I saw the company get into their barges at Whitehall stairs, as I was going myself, and just then passed by two city companies in their great barges, who had been a-swan hopping. They laid by and played "God save our noble king;" and altogether it was a mighty pretty show. When they came to Vauxhall, there were assembled about five-and-twenty hundred people, besides crowds without. They huzzaed, and surrounded him so, that he was forced to retreat into the ball-room. He was very near being drowned t'other night going from Ranelagh to Vauxhall, by a politeness of lord Cathcart's, who, stepping on the side of the boat to lend his arm, overset it, and both fell into the water up to their chins.

I have not yet got sir Charles's ode; when I have, you shall see it: here are my own lines. Good night.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, August 11, 1746.

DEAR GEORGE,

I HAVE seen Mr. Jordan, and have taken his house at forty guineas a-year, but I am to pay taxes.

Shall I now accept your offer of being at the trouble of giving orders for the airing of it? I have desired the landlord will order the key to be delivered to you, and Asheton will assist you. Furniture, I find, I have in abundance, which I shall send down immediately; but shall not be able to be at Windsor at the quivering dame's before to-morrow sennight, as the rebel lords are not to be executed till Monday. I shall stay till that is over, though I don't believe I shall see it. Lord Cromartie is reprieved for a pardon. If wives and children become an argument for saving rebels, there will cease to be a reason against their going into rebellion. Lady Caroline Fitzroy's execution is certainly to-night. I dare say she will follow lord Balmerino's advice to lord Kilmarnock, and not winch.

Lord Sandwich has made Mr. Keith his secretary. I don't believe the founder of your race, the great Quu of Habiculeo, would have chosen his secretary from California.

I would willingly return the civilities you laid upon me at Windsor. Do command me; in what can I serve you? Shall I get you an earldom? Don't think it will be any trouble; there is nothing easier or cheaper. Lord Hobart and lord Fitzwilliam are both to be earls to-morrow; the former of Buckingham, the latter by his already title. I suppose lord Malton will be a duke; he

has had no new peerage this fortnight. Adieu! My compliments to the virtuous ladies, Arabella and Hounsibella Quus.

Yours ever.

P. S. Here is an order for the key.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, August 16, 1746.

DEAR GEORGE,

I SHALL be with you on Tuesday night, and since you are so good as to be my Rowland White, must beg my apartment at the quivering dame's may be aired for me. My caravan sets out with all my household stuff on Monday; but I have heard nothing of your sister's hamper, nor do I know how to send the bantams by it, but will leave them here till I am more settled under the shade of my own mulberry-tree.

I have been this morning at the Tower, and passed under the new heads at Temple Bar, where people make a trade of letting spying-glasses at a halfpenny a look. Old Lovat arrived last night. I saw Murray, lord Derwentwater, lord Traquair, lord Cromartie and his son, and the lord provost, at their respective windows. The other two wretched lords are in dismal towers, and they

have stopped up one of old Balmerino's windows, because he talked to the populace; and now he has only one, which looks directly upon all the scaffolding. They brought in the death-warrant at his dinner. His wife fainted. He said, "Lieutenant, with your damned warrant you have spoiled my lady's stomach." He has written a sensible letter to the duke to beg his intercession, and the duke has given it to the king; but gave a much colder answer to duke Hamilton, who went to beg it for lord Kilmarnock; he told him the affair was in the king's hands, and that he had nothing to do with it. Lord Kilmarnock, who has hitherto kept up his spirits, grows extremely terrified. It will be difficult to make you believe to what heights of affectation or extravagance my lady Townshend carries her passion for my lord Kilmarnock, whom she never saw but at the bar of his trial, and was smitten with his falling shoulders. She has been under his windows, sends messages to him, has got his dog and his snuff-box, has taken lodgings out of town for to-morrow and Monday night; and then goes to Greenwich, forswears conversing with the bloody English, and has taken a French master. She insisted on lord Hervey's promising her he would not sleep a whole night for my lord Kilmarnock, "and in return," says she, "never trust me more if I am not as yellow as a jonquil for him." She said gravely t'other day, "Since I saw my lord Kil-

marnock, I really think no more of sir Harry Nisbett, than if there was no such man in the world." But of all her flights yesterday was the strongest. George Selwyn dined with her, and not thinking her affliction so serious as she pretends, talked rather jokingly of the execution. She burst into a flood of tears and rage, told him she now believed all his father and mother had said of him, and with a thousand other reproaches flung up stairs. George coolly took Mrs. Dorcas, her woman, and made her sit down to finish the bottle: "and pray, sir," said Dorcas, "do you think my lady will be prevailed upon to let me go see the execution? I have a friend that has promised to take care of me, and I can lie in the Tower the night before." My lady has quarrelled with sir Charles Windham for calling the two lords malefactors. The idea seems to be general, for 'tis said lord Cromartie is to be transported, which diverts me for the dignity of the peerage. The ministry really gave it as a reason against their casting lots for pardon, that it was below their dignity. I did not know but that might proceed from Balmerino's not being an earl; and, therefore, now their hand is in, would have them make him one. You will see in the papers the second great victory at Placentia. There are papers pasted in several parts of the town, threatening your cousin Sandwich's head if he makes a dishonourable peace.

I will bring you down sir Charles Williams' new ode on the Manchester.[1] Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Windsor still,[2] Oct. 3, 1746.

MY DEAR HARRY,

You ask me if I am really grown a philosopher. Really I believe not; for I shall refer you to my practice rather than to my doctrine, and have really acquired what they only pretended to seek, content. So far indeed I was a philosopher even when I lived in town, for then I was content too; and all the difference I can conceive between those two opposite doctors was, that Aristippus loved London, and Diogenes Windsor: and if your master the duke, whom I sincerely prefer to Alexander, and who certainly can intercept more sunshine, would but stand out of my way, which he is extremely in, while he lives in the park here, I should love my little tub of forty pounds a year, more than my palace *dans la rue des ministres,*

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[1] Isabella, duchess of Manchester, married to Edward Hussey, esq.

[2] In the summer of the year 1746 Mr. Walpole had hired a small house at Windsor.

with all my pictures and bronzes, which you ridiculously imagine I have encumbered myself with in my solitude. Solitude it is, as to the tub itself, for no soul lives in it with me; though I could easily give you room at the butt end of it, and with vast pleasure; but George Montagu, who perhaps is a philosopher too, though I am sure not of Pythagoras's silent sect, lives but two barrels off; and Asheton, a Christian philosopher of our acquaintance, lives at the foot of that hill which you mention with a melancholy satisfaction that always attends the reflection. A-propos, here is an ode on the very subject, which I desire you will please to like excessively[3]: *

You will immediately conclude, out of good breeding, that it is mine, and that it is charming. I shall be much obliged to you for the first thought, but desire you will retain only the second, for it is Mr. Gray's, and not

Your humble servant's.

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[3] Here follows Mr. Gray's Ode on the distant prospect of Eton college.

To the Hon. H. S. Conway.

Windsor, Oct. 24, 1746

Well, Harry, Scotland is the last place on earth I should have thought of for turning any body poet: but I begin to forgive it half its treasons in favour of your verses, for I suppose you don't think I am the dupe of the highland story that you tell me: the only use I shall make of it is to commend the lines to you, as if they really were a Scotchman's. There is a melancholy harmony in them that is charming, and a delicacy in the thoughts that no Scotchman is capable of, though a *Scotchwoman* might inspire it. I beg both for Cynthia's sake and my own that you would continue your de Tristibus, till I have an opportunity of seeing your muse, and she of rewarding her: *Reprens ta musette, berger amoureux!* If Cynthia has ever travelled ten miles in fairy land, she must be wondrous content with the person and qualifications of her knight, who in future story will be read of thus: Elmedorus was tall and perfectly well made, his face oval, and features regularly handsome, but not effeminate; his complexion sentimentally brown, with not much colour; his teeth fine, and forehead agreeably low, round which his black hair curled naturally and beautifully. His eyes were black too, but had nothing of fierce or insolent; on the con-

trary, a certain melancholy swimmingness that described hopeless love, rather than a natural amorous languish. His exploits in war, where he always fought by the side of the renowned Paladine William of England, have endeared his memory to all admirers of true chivalry, as the mournful elegies which he poured out among the desert rocks of Caledonia[1] in honour of the peerless lady and his heart's idol, the incomparable Cynthia, will for ever preserve his name in the flowery annals of poesy.

What a pity it is I was not born in the golden age of Louis the fourteenth, when it was not only the fashion to write folios, but to read them too! Or rather, it is a pity the same fashion don't subsist now, when one need not be at the trouble of invention, nor of turning the whole Roman history into romance, for want of proper heroes. Your campaign in Scotland rolled out and well be-epitheted would make a pompous work, and make one's fortune; at six-pence a number, one should have all the damsels within the liberties for subscribers: whereas now, if one has a mind to be read, one must write metaphysical poems in blank verse, which though I own to be still easier, have not half the imagination of romances, and

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[1] Mr. Conway was now in Scotland.

are dull without any agreeable absurdity. Only think of the gravity of this wise age, that have exploded *Cleopatra and Pharamond*, and approve *The Pleasures of the Imagination, The Art of preserving Health*, and *Leonidas!*—I beg the age's pardon: it has done approving these poems, and has forgot them.

Adieu, dear Harry! Thank you seriously for the poem. I am going to town for the birth-day, and shall return hither till the parliament meets; I suppose there is no doubt of our meeting then.

Yours ever.

P. S. Now you are at Stirling, if you should meet with Drummond's History of the five king Jameses, pray look it over. I have lately read it, and like it much. It is wrote in imitation of Livy, the style masculine, and the whole very sensible—only he ascribes the misfortunes of one reign to the then king's loving architecture, and

"In trim gardens taking pleasure."

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Nov. 3, 1746.

DEAR GEORGE,

Do not imagine I have already broke through all my wholesome resolutions and country schemes, and that I am given up, body and soul, to London for the winter. I shall be with you by the end of the week; but just now I am under the maiden palpitation of an author. My epilogue will, I believe, be spoken to-morrow night;[1] and I flatter myself I shall have no faults to answer for, but what are in it, for I have kept secret whose it is. It is now gone to be licensed; but, as the lord chamberlain[2] is mentioned, though rather to his honour, it is possible it may be refused.

Don't expect news, for I know no more than a newspaper. Asheton would have written it if there were any thing to tell you. Is it news that my lord Rochford is an oaf? He has got a set of plate buttons for the birth-day clothes, with the duke's head in every one. Sure my good lady

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[1] Tamerlane was always acted on the 4th and 5th of Nov. the anniversaries of king William's birth and landing; and this year Mr. Walpole had written an Epilogue for it, on the suppression of the rebellion.

[2] The duke of Grafton

carries her art too far to make him so great a dupe. How do all the comets? Has miss Harriet found out any more ways at *solitaire?* Has Cloe left off evening prayer on account of the damp evenings? How is miss Rice's cold and coachman? Is miss Granville better? Has Mrs. Masham made a brave hand of this bad season, and lived upon carcases like any vampire? Adieu! I am just going to see Mrs. Muscovy, and will be sure not to laugh if my old lady should talk of Mr. Draper's white skin, and tickle his bosom like queen Bess.

Yours ever.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, April 16, 1747.

Dear Harry,

We are all skyrockets and bonfires to-night for your last year's victory;[1] but if you have a mind to perpetuate yourselves in the calendar, you must take care to refresh your conquests. I was yesterday out of town, and the very signs as I passed through the villages made me make very quaint reflections on the mortality of fame and popularity. I observed how the duke's head had suc-

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[1] The battle of Culloden.

ceeded almost universally to admiral Vernon's, as his had left but few traces of the duke of Ormond's. I pondered these things in my heart, and said unto myself, Surely all glory is but as a sign![2]

You have heard that old Lovat's[3] tragedy is over: it has been succeeded by a little farce, containing the humours of the duke of Newcastle and his man Stone. The first event was a squabble between his grace and the sheriff about holding up the head on the scaffold—a custom that has been disused, and which the sheriff would not comply with, as he received no order in writing. Since that the duke has burst ten yards of breeches strings[4] about the body, which was to be sent into Scotland; but it seems it is customary for vast numbers to rise to attend the most trivial burial. The duke, who is always at least as much frightened at doing right as at doing wrong, was three days before he got courage enough to order the burying in the Tower. I must tell you an excessive good story of George Selwyn: Some women were scolding him for going to see the execution, and asked him, how he could be such a barbarian

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[2] Soon after Mr. Walpole published a paper in The World upon this subject.

[3] Simon Frazer lord Lovat, beheaded on Tower-hill the 9th of April 1747.

[4] Alluding to a trick of the duke of Newcastle's.

to see the head cut off?' "Nay," says he, "if that was such a crime, I am sure I have made amends, for I went to see it sewed on again." When he was at the undertaker's, as soon as they had stitched him together, and were going to put the body into the coffin, George, in my lord chancellor's voice, said, "My lord Lovat, your lordship may rise." My lady Townshend has picked up a little stable-boy in the Tower, which the warders have put upon her for a natural son of lord Kilmarnock's, and taken him into her own house. You need not tell Mr. T. this from me.

We have had a great and fine day in the house on the second reading the bill for taking away the heritable jurisdictions in Scotland. Lyttelton[5] made the finest oration imaginable; the solicitor general,[6] the new advocate,[7] and Hume Campbell,[8] particularly the last, spoke excessively well for it, and Oswald[9] against it. The majority was 233 against 102. Pitt[10] was not there; the duchess of Queensberry had ordered him to have the gout.

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[5] Sir George, afterwards created lord Lyttelton.

[6] William Murray, afterwards earl of Mansfield.

[7] William Grant, lord advocate of Scotland.

[8] Only brother to the earl of Marchmont.

[9] James Oswald, afterwards a lord of trade, and vice-treasurer of Ireland.

[10] William Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham.

I will give you a commission once more to tell lord Bury[11] that he has quite dropped me: if I thought he would take me up again, I would write to him; a message would encourage me. Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Twickenham, June 8, 1747.

You perceive by my date that I am got into a new camp, and have left my tub at Windsor. It is a little play-thing-house that I got out of Mrs. Chenevix's shop, and is the prettiest bawble you ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows, with philigree hedges:

> A small Euphrates through the piece is roll'd,
> And little finches wave their wings in gold.

Two delightful roads, that you would call dusty, supply me continually with coaches and chaises: barges as solemn as barons of the exchequer move under my window; Richmond-hill and Ham-walks bound my prospect; but, thank God! the Thames

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[11] George Keppel, eldest son of William earl of Albemarle, whom he succeeded in the title in 1755. He was now, together with Mr. Conway, aide-du-camp to the duke of Cumberland.

is between me and the duchess of Queensberry. Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around, and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. I have about land enough to keep such a farm as Noah's, when he set up in the ark with a pair of each kind, but my cottage is rather cleaner than I believe his was after they had been cooped up together forty days. The Chenevixes had tricked it out for themselves: up two pair of stairs is what they call Mr. Chenevix's library, furnished with three maps, one shelf, a bust of sir Isaac Newton, and a lame telescope without any glasses. Lord John Sackville *predecessed* me here, and instituted certain games called *cricketalia*, which have been celebrated this very evening in honour of him in a neighbouring meadow.

You will think I have removed my philosophy from Windsor with my tea-things hither; for I am writing to you in all this tranquillity while a parliament is bursting about my ears. You know it is going to be dissolved: I am told, you are taken care of, though I don't know where, nor whether any body that chooses you will quarrel with me because he does choose you, as that little bug * * * * * * did; one of the calamities of my life which I have bore as abominably well as I do most about which I don't care. They say the prince has taken up two hundred thousand pounds, to carry elections which he won't

carry:—he had much better have saved it to buy the parliament after it is chosen. A new set of peers are in embryo, to add more dignity to the silence of the house of lords.

I make no remarks on your campaign,[1] because, as you say, you do nothing at all; which, though very proper nutriment for a thinking head, does not do quite so well to write upon. If any one of you can but contrive to be shot upon your post, it is all we desire, shall look upon it as a great curiosity, and will take care to set up a monument to the person so slain, as we are doing by vote to captain ****, who was killed at the beginning of the action in the Mediterranean four years ago. In the present dearth of glory, he is canonized, though, poor man! he had been tried twice the year before for cowardice.

I could tell you much election-news, none else; though not being thoroughly attentive to so important a subject, as to be sure one ought to be, I might now and then mistake, and give you a candidate for Durham in place of one for Southampton, or name the returning-officer instead of the candidate. In general, I believe, it is much as usual—those sold in detail that afterwards will be sold in the representation—the ministers bribing Jacobites to choose friends of their own—the

[1] Mr. Conway was in Flanders.

name of well-wishers to the present establishment, and patriots, outbidding ministers that they may make the better market of their own patriotism: —in short, all England, under some name or other, is just now to be bought and sold; though, whenever we become posterity and forefathers, we shall be in high repute for wisdom and virtue. My great great grandchildren will figure me with a white beard down to my girdle; and Mr. Pitt's will believe him unspotted enough to have walked over nine hundred hot ploughshares, without hurting the sole of his foot. How merry my ghost will be, and shake its ears to hear itself quoted as a person of consummate prudence!— Adieu, dear Harry!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, July 2, 1747.

DEAR GEORGE,

THOUGH we have no great reason to triumph, as we have certainly been defeated, yet the French have as certainly bought their victory dear: indeed, what would be very dear to us is not so much to them. However their least loss is twelve thousand men; as our least loss is five thousand. The truth of the whole is, that the duke was de-

termined to fight at all events, which the French, who determined not to fight but at great odds, took advantage of. His royal highness's valour has shone extremely, but at the expense of his judgment. Harry Conway, whom nature always designed for a hero of a romance, and who is *deplacé* in ordinary life, did wonders; but was overpowered and flung down, when one French hussar held him by the hair, while another was going to stab him: at that instant an English sergeant with a soldier came up, and killed the latter; but was instantly killed himself: the soldier attacked the other, and Mr. Conway escaped; but was afterwards taken prisoner; is since released on parole, and may come home to console his fair widow, whose brother Harry Campbell, is certainly killed, to the great concern of all widows who want consolation. The French have lost the prince of Monaco, the Comte de Baviere, natural brother to the last emperor, and many officers of great rank. The French king saw the whole through a spying glass, from a Hampstead Hill, environed with twenty thousand men. Our guards did shamefully, and many officers. The king had a line from Huske in Zealand on the Friday night, to tell him we were defeated; of his son not a word: judge of his anxiety till three o'clock on Saturday! Lord Sandwich had a letter in his pocket all the while, and kept it there, which said the duke was well.

We flourish at sea, have taken great part of the

Domingo fleet, and I suppose shall have more lords. The *countess* touched twelve thousand for sir Jacob Bouverie's coronet.

I know nothing of my own election; but suppose it is over: as little of Rigby's, and conclude it lost. For franks, I suppose they don't begin till the whole is complete. My compliments to your brothers and sisters.

I am, dear George,

Yours most sincerely.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Oct. 1, 1747.

Dear George,

I wish I could have answered your invitation from the Tigress's with my own person, but it was impossible. I wish your farmer would answer invitations with the persons of more hens and fewer cocks; for I am raising a breed, and not recruits. The time before he sent two to one, and he has done so again. I had a letter from Mr. Conway, who is piteously going into prison again: our great secretary has let the time slip for executing the cartel, and the French have reclaimed their prisoners. The duke[1] is coming back. I

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[1] Duke of Cumberland.

fear his candles are gone to bed to admiral Vernon's! He has been ill; they say his head has been more affected than his body. Marshal Saxe sent him cardinal Polignac's Anti-Lucretius to send to lord Chesterfield. If he won't let him be a general, at least 'tis hard to reduce him to a courier.

When I saw you at *Kyk in de Pot*, I forgot to tell you that seven more volumes of the Journals are delivering: there's employment for Moreland. I go back to *Kyk in de Pot* to-morrow. Did you dislike it so much that you could not bring yourself to persuade your brother to try it with you for a day or two? I shall be there till the birthday, if you will come.

George Selwyn says, people send to lord Pembroke to know how the bridge rested. You know George never thinks but *à la tête tranchée*: he came to town t'other day to have a tooth drawn, and told the man that he would drop his handkerchief for the signal. My compliments to your family. I am,

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

May 18, 1748.

HERE I am with the poor Chutched,[1] who has put on a shoe but to-day for the first time. He sits at the receipt of custom, and one passes most part of the day here; the other part I have the misfortune to pass en Pigwiggin. The ceremony of dining is not over yet: I cannot say that either the prince or the princess look the comelier for what has happened. The town says, my lady Anson has no chance for looking different from what she did before she was married: and they have a story of a gentleman going to the chancellor to assure him, that if he gave his daughter to the admiral, he would be obliged hereafter to pronounce a sentence of dissolution of the marriage. The chancellor replied, that his daughter had been taught to think of the union of the soul, not of the body: the gentleman then made the same confidence to the chancelloress, and received much such an answer: that her daughter had been bred to submit herself to the will of God. I don't at all give you all this for true; but there is an ugly circumstance in his voyages of his not having the curiosity to see a beautiful captive,

[1] John Chute, Esq. of the Vine in Hampshire.

that he took on board a Spanish ship. There is no record of Scipio's having been in Doctor's Commons. I have been reading these voyages, and find them very silly and contradictory. He sets out with telling you that he had no soldiers sent with him but old invalids without legs or arms; and then in the middle of the book there is a whole chapter to tell you, what they would have done if they had set out two months sooner; and that was no less than conquering Peru and Mexico with this disabled army. At the end there is an account of the neglect he received from the viceroy of Canton, till he and forty of his sailors put out a great fire in that city, which the Chinese and five hundred firemen could not do, which he says proceeded from their awkwardness; a new character of the Chinese! He was then admitted to an audience, and found two hundred men at the gate of the city, and ten thousand in the square before the palace, all new dressed for the purpose. This is about as true as his predecessor Gulliver * * * out the fire at Lilliput. The King is still wind-bound; the fashionable *bon mot* is, that the duke of Newcastle has tied a stone about his neck and sent him to sea. The city grows furious about the peace; there is one or two very uncouth Hanover articles, besides a persuasion of a pension to the Pretender, which is so very ignominious that I don't know how to persuade myself it is true. The duke of

Argyle has made them give him three places for life of a thousand and twelve hundred a-year for three of his court, to compensate for their making a man president of the session against his inclination. The princess of Wales has got a confirmed jaundice, but they reckon her much better. Sir Harry Calthrop is gone mad: he walked down Pall Mall t'other day with his red ribband tied about his hair; said he was going to the king, and would not submit to be blooded till they told him the king commanded it.

I went yesterday to see marshal Wade's house, which is selling by auction: it is worse contrived on the inside than is conceivable, all to humour the beauty of the front. My lord Chesterfield said, that to be sure he could not live in it, but intended to take the house over against it to look at it. It is literally true, that all the direction he gave my lord Burlington was to have a place for a large cartoon of Rubens that he had bought in Flanders; but my lord found it necessary to have so many correspondent doors, that there was no room at last for the picture; and the marshal was forced to sell the picture to my father: it is now at Houghton.

As Windsor is so charming, and particularly as you have got so agreeable a new neighbour at Frogmore, to be sure you cannot wish to have the prohibition taken off of your coming to Strawberry-Hill. However, as I am an admirable

Christian, and as I think you seem to repent of your errors, I will give you leave to be so happy as to come to me when you like, though I would advise it to be after you have been at Roel,[1] which you would not be able to bear after my paradise. I have told you a vast deal of something or other, which you will scarce be able to read; for now Mr. Chute has the gout, he keeps himself very low and lives upon very thin ink. My compliments to all your people.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 26, 1748.

Good b'ye to you! I am going to my Roel too. I was there yesterday to dine, and it looked so delightful, think what you will, that I shall go there to-morrow to settle, and shall leave this odious town to the * * *, to the regency, and the dowagers; to my lady Townshend, who is not going to Windsor, to old Cobham, who is not going out of the world yet, and to the duchess of Richmond, who does not go out with her

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[1] A house of Mr. Montagu's in Gloucestershire.

twenty-fifth pregnancy: I shall leave too more disagreeable Ranelagh, which is so crowded, that going there t'other night in a string of coaches we had a stop of six-and-thirty minutes. Princess Emily finding no marriage articles for her settled at the congress, has at last determined to be old and out of danger; and has accordingly ventured to Ranelagh, to the great improvement of the pleasures of the place. The prince has given a silver cup to be rowed for, which carried every body upon the Thames; and afterwards there was a great ball at Carlton House. There have two good events happened at that court: the town was alarmed t'other morning by the firing of guns, which proved to be only from a large merchantman come into the river. The city construed it into the king's return, and the peace broke; but chancellor Bootle and the bishop of Oxford, who loves a labour next to promoting the cause of it, concluded the princess was brought to bed, and went to court upon it. Bootle, finding the princess dressed, said, "I have always heard, madam, that women in your country have very easy labours; but I could not have believed it was so well as I see." The other story is of prince Edward. The king before he went away, sent Stainberg to examine the prince's children in their learning. The baron told prince Edward that he should tell the king, what great proficiency his highness had made in his Latin, but that he wished he would

be a little more perfect in his German grammar, and that it would be of signal use to him. The child squinted at him, and said, "German grammar! why any dull child can learn that." There, I have told you royalties enough!

My Pigwiggin dinners are all over, for which I truly say grace. I have had difficulties to keep my countenance at the wonderful clumsiness and uncouth nicknames that the duke has for all his offspring: Mrs. Hopefull, Mrs. Tiddle, Puss, Cat, and Toe, sound so strange in the middle of a most formal banquet! The day the peace was signed, his grace could find nobody to communicate joy with him: he drove home, and bawled out of the chariot to lady Rachel, "Cat, Cat!" She ran down, staring over the ballustrade; he cried, "Cat, Cat, the peace is made, and you must be very glad, for I am very glad."

I send you the only new pamphlet worth reading, and this is more the matter than the manner. My compliments to all your tribe. Adieu!

Yours ever.

P. S. The divine Asheton has got an ague, which he says prevents his coming amongst us.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Mistley, July 25, 1748.

DEAR GEORGE,

I HAVE wished you with me extremely; you would have liked what I have seen. I have been to make a visit of two or three days to Nugent, and was carried to see the last remains of the glory of the old Aubrey de Veres, earls of Oxford. They were once masters of almost this entire county, but quite reduced even before the extinction of their house; the last earl's son died at a miserable cottage, that I was shewn at a distance; and I think another of the sisters, besides lady Mary Vere, was forced to live upon her beauty.

Henningham Castle, where Harry the seventh[1] was so sumptuously banquetted, and imposed that villanous fine for his entertainment, is now shrunk to one vast curious tower, that stands on a spacious mount raised on a high hill with a large fosse. It commands a fine prospect, and belongs to Mr. Ashurst, a rich citizen, who has built a trumpery new house close to it. In the parish church is a fine square monument of black marble of one of the earls, and there are three more tombs of the family at Earls Colne some miles from the castle.

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[1] Vide Hume's History of England, Vol. III. page 399.

I could see but little of them, as it was very late, except that one of the countesses has a head-dress exactly like the description of mount Parnassus, with two tops. I suppose you have heard much of Gosfield, Nugent's seat. It is extremely in fashion, but did not answer to me, though there are fine things about it; but being situated in a country that is quite blocked up with hills upon hills, and even too much wood, it has not an inch of prospect. The park is to be sixteen hundred acres, and is bounded with a wood of five miles round; and the lake, which is very beautiful, is of seventy acres, directly in a line with the house, at the bottom of a fine lawn, and broke with very pretty groves, that fall down a slope into it. The house is vast, built round a very old court that has never been fine; the old windows and gateway left, and the old gallery, which is a bad narrow room, and hung with all the late patriots, but so ill done, that they look like caricatures done to expose them, since they have so much disgraced the virtues they pretended to. The rest of the house is all modernized, but in patches, and in the bad taste that came between the charming venerable gothic and pure architecture. There is a great deal of good furniture, but no one room very fine: no tolerable pictures. Her dressing-room is very pretty, and furnished with white damask, china, japan, loads of easy chairs, bad pictures, and some pretty enamels. But what

charmed me more than all I had seen, is the library chimney, which has existed from the foundation of the house; over it is an alto-relievo in wood, far from being ill done, of the battle of Bosworth Field. It is all white, except the helmets and trappings, which are gilt, and the shields, which are properly blazoned with the arms of all the chiefs engaged. You would adore it. We passed our time very agreeably; both Nugent and his wife are very good-humoured, and easy in their house to a degree. There was nobody else but the marquis of Tweedale, his new marchioness,[2] who is infinitely good-humoured and good company, and sang a thousand French songs mighty prettily, a sister of Nugent's, who does not figure, and a Mrs. Elliot, sister to Mrs. Nugent, who crossed over and figured in with Nugent: I mean she has turned catholic, as he has protestant. She has built herself a very pretty small house in the park, and is only a daily visitor. Nugent was extremely communicative of his own labours; repeated us an ode of ten thousand stanzas to abuse Messieurs de la Gallerie, and read me a whole tragedy, which has really a great many pretty things in it; not indeed equal to his glorious ode on religion and liberty, but with many of those absurdities,

[2] Daughter of the earl of Granville.

which are so blended with his parts. We were overturned coming back, but thank you we were not at all hurt, and have been to-day to see a large house and a pretty park belonging to a Mr. Williams; it is to be sold. You have seen in the papers that Dr. Bloxholme is dead. He cut his throat. He always was nervous and vapoured; and so good-natured, that he left off his practice from not being able to bear seeing so many melancholy objects. I remember him with as much wit as ever I knew; there was a pretty correspondence of Latin odes that passed between him and Hodges.

You will be diverted to hear that the duchess of Newcastle was received at Calais by Locheil's regiment under arms, who did duty himself while she staid. The duke of Grafton is going to Scarborough; don't you love that endless backstairs policy? and at his time of life! This fit of ill health is arrived on the princes' going to shoot for a fortnight at Thetford, and his grace is afraid of not being civil enough or too civil.

Since I wrote my letter I have been fishing in Rapin for any particulars relating to the Veres, and have already found that Robert de Vere,[3] the

[3] Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, was the favourite of Richard the second, who created him marquis of Dublin and duke of Ireland, and transferred to him by patent the entire sovereignty of that island for life.

great duke of Ireland, and favourite of Richard the second, is buried at Earls Colne, and probably under one of the tombs I saw there; I long to be certain that the lady with the strange coeffure is Lancerona the joiner's daughter, that he married after divorcing a princess of the blood for her. I have found too that king Stephen's queen died at Henningham, a castle belonging to Alberic de Vere:[4] in short I am just now Vere mad, and extremely mortified to have Lancerona and lady Vere Beauclerk's[5] Portuguese grandmother blended with this brave old blood. Adieu! I go to town the day after to-morrow, and immediately from thence to Strawberry-hill.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, August 11, 1748.

I AM arrived at great knowledge in the annals of the House of Vere, but though I have twisted

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[4] Alberic de Vere was an earl in the reign of Edward the Confessor.

[5] Daughter of Thomas Chambers, esq. and married to lord Vere Beauclerc, third son of the first duke of St. Albans by his wife Diana, daughter of Aubrey de Vere, earl of Oxford.

and twined their genealogy and my own a thousand ways, I cannot discover, as I wished to do, that I am descended from them any how but from one of their Christian names; the name of Horace having travelled from them into Norfolk by the marriage of a daughter of Horace lord Vere of Tilbury with a sir Roger Townshend, whose family baptized some of us with it. But I have made a really curious discovery; the lady with the strange dress at Earls Colne, which I mentioned to you, is certainly Lancerona, the Portuguese; for I have found in Rapin, from one of the old chronicles, that Anne of Bohemia, to whom she had been maid of honour, introduced the fashion of *piked horns*, or high heads, which is the very attire on this tomb, and ascertains it to belong to Robert de Vere the great earl of Oxford, made duke of Ireland by Richard II, who, after the banishment of this minister, and his death at Louvain occasioned by a boar at a hunting match, caused the body to be brought over, would have the coffin opened once more to see his favourite, and attended it himself in high procession to its interment at Earls Colne. I don't know whether the craftsman some years ago would not have found out that we were descended from this Vere, at least from his name and ministry: my comfort is, that Lancerona was earl Robert's second wife. But in this search I have crossed upon another descent, which I am taking great pains to verify

(I don't mean a pun) and that is a probability of my being descended from Chaucer, whose daughter, the lady Alice, before her espousals with Thomas Montacute earl of Salisbury, and afterwards with William de la Pole the great duke of Suffolk, (another famous favourite) was married to a sir John Philips, who I hope to find was of Picton Castle, and had children by her; but I have not yet brought these matters to a consistency: Mr. Chute is persuaded I shall, for he says any body with two or three hundred years of pedigree may find themselves descended from whom they please; and thank my stars and my good cousin, the present sir J. Philips,[1] I have a sufficient pedigree to work upon; for he drew us up one, by which *Ego et rex meus* are derived hand in hand from Cadwallader, and the English baronetage says from the emperor Maximus (by the Philips's, who are Welsh, *s'entend.*) These Veres have thrown me into a deal of this old study: t'other night I was reading to Mrs. Leneve and Mrs. Pigot, who has been here a few days, the description in Hall's chronicle of the meeting of Harry VIII. and Francis I. which is so delightfully painted in your Windsor. We came to a paragraph, which I must transcribe, for though

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[1] The grandmother of the hon. Horace Walpole was daughter of sir Erasmus Philips, of Picton Castle in Pembrokeshire.

it means nothing in the world, it is so ridiculously worded in the old English that it made us laugh for three days:

And the wer twoo kynges serued with a banket and after mirthe, had communication in the banket tyme, and there shewed the one the other their pleasure.

Would not one swear that old Hal shewed all that is shewed in the tower? I am now in the act of expecting the house of Pritchard,[2] dame Clive,[2] and Mrs. Metheglin to dinner. I promise you the Clive and I will not show one another our pleasure during the banket time nor afterwards. In the evening we go to a play at Kingston, where the places are two pence a head. Our great company at Richmond and Twickenham has been torn to pieces by civil dissensions, but they continue acting. Mr. Lee, the ape of Garrick, not liking his part, refused to play it, and had the confidence to go into the pit as spectator. The actress, whose benefit was in agitation, made her complaints to the audience, who obliged him to mount the stage; but since that he has retired from the company. I am sorry he was such a coxcomb, for he was the best.

You say, why won't I go to lady Mary's? I

[2] Two celebrated actresses.

say, why won't you go to the Talbots? Mary is busied about many things, is dancing the hays between three houses; but I will go with you for a day or two to the Talbots if you like it, and you shall come hither to fetch me. I have been to see Mr. Hamilton's, near Cobham, where he has really made a fine place out of a most cursed hill. Esher I have seen again twice, and prefer it to all villas, even to Southcote's—Kent is Kentissime there. I have been laughing too at Claremont-house; the gardens are improved since I saw them: do you know that the pine apples are literally sent to Hanover by couriers? I am serious. Since the duke of Newcastle went, and upon the news of the duke of Somerset's illness, he has transmitted his commands through the king, and by him through the Bedford to the university of Cambridge to forbid their electing any body, but the most ridiculous person they could elect, his grace of Newcastle. The Prince hearing this, has written to them, that having heard his majesty's commands, he should by no means oppose them. This is sensible; but how do the two secretaries answer such a violent act of authority? Nolkejumskoi[3] has let down his dignity and his discipline, and invites continually all officers that are members of parliament. Doddington's sen-

[3] A cant name for the duke of Cumberland.

tence of expulsion is sealed; Lyttleton is to have his place (the second time he has tripped up his heels); lord Barrington is to go to the treasury, and Dick Edgecumbe into the admiralty.

Rigby is gone from hence to sir William Stanhope's to the Aylesbury races, where the Grenvilles and Peggy Banks design to appear and avow their triumph. Gray has been here a few days, and is transported with your story of madame Bentley's diving, and her white man, and in short with all your stories. Room for cuckolds—here comes my company—

August 12.

I had not time to finish my letter last night, for we did not return from the dismal play, which was in a barn at Kingston, till twelve o'clock at night. Our dinner passed off very well; the Clive was very good company; you know how much she admires Asheton's preaching. She says, she is always vastly good for two or three days after his sermons; but by the time that Thursday comes, all their effect is worn out. I never saw more proper decent behaviour than Mrs. Pritchard's, and I assure you even Mr. Treasurer Pritchard was far better than I expected.

Yours ever,

CHAUCERIDES.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, August 29, 1748.

Dear Harry,

Whatever you may think, a campaign at Twickenham furnishes as little matter for a letter as an abortive one in Flanders. I can't say indeed that my generals wear black wigs, but they have long full-bottomed hoods which cover as little entertainment to the full.

There's general my lady Castlecomer, and general my lady dowager Ferrers! Why do you think I can extract more out of them than you can out of Hawley or Honeywood? Your old women dress, go to the duke's levee, see that the soldiers cock their hats right, sleep after dinner, and soak with their led captains till bed-time, and tell a thousand lies of what they never did in their youth. Change hats for head-clothes, the rounds for visits, and led captains for toad-eaters, and the life is the very same. In short, these are the people I live in the midst of, though not with; and it is for want of more important histories that I have wrote to you seldom; not, I give you my word, from the least negligence. My present and sole occupation is planting, in which I have made great progress, and talk very learnedly with the nurserymen, except that now and then a lettuce run to seed overturns all my botany, as I have

more than once taken it for a curious West-Indian flowering shrub. Then the deliberation with which trees grow, is extremely inconvenient to my natural impatience. I lament living in so barbarous an age, when we are come to so little perfection in gardening. I am persuaded that a hundred and fifty years hence it will be as common to remove oaks a hundred and fifty years old, as it is now to transplant tulip-roots. I have even begun a treatise or panegyric on the great discoveries made by posterity in all arts and sciences, wherein I shall particulary descant on the great and cheap convenience of making trout-rivers—one of the improvements which Mrs. Kerwood wondered Mr. Hedges would not make at his country-house, but which was not then quite so common as it will be. I shall talk of a secret for roasting a wild boar and a whole pack of hounds alive, without hurting them, so that the whole chace may be brought up to table; and for this secret, the duke of Newcastle's grandson, if he can ever get a son, is to give a hundred thousand pounds. Then the delightfulness of having whole groves of humming-birds, tame tigers taught to fetch and carry, pocket spying glasses to see all that is doing in China, with a thousand other toys, which we now look upon as impracticable, and which pert posterity would laugh in one's face for staring at, while they are offering rewards for perfecting discoveries, of the principles of which we have not

the least conception! If ever this book should come forth, I must expect to have all the learned in arms against me, who measure all knowledge backward: some of them have discovered symptoms of all arts in Homer; and Pineda[1] had so much faith in the accomplishments of his ancestors, that he believed Adam understood all sciences but politics. But as these great champions for our forefathers are dead, and Boileau not alive to hitch me into a verse with Perrault, I am determined to admire the learning of posterity, especially being convinced that half our present knowledge sprung from discovering the errors of what had formerly been called so. I don't think I shall ever make any great discoveries myself, and therefore shall be content to propose them to my descendents, like my lord Bacon, who, as doctor Shaw says very prettily in his preface to Boyle, *had the art of inventing arts*: or rather like a marquis of Worcester, of whom I have seen a little book which he calls A Century of Inventions, where he has set down a hundred machines to do impossibilities with, and not a single direction how to make the machines themselves.

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[1] Pineda was a Spanish Jesuit, and a professor of theology. He died 1637, after writing voluminous commentaries upon several books of the holy Scriptures, besides an universal history of the church.

If I happen to be less punctual in my correspondence than I intend to be, you must conclude I am writing my book, which being designed for a panegyric, will cost me a great deal of trouble. The dedication, with your leave, shall be addressed to your son that is coming, or, with my lady Aislesbury's leave, to your ninth son, who will be unborn nearer to the time I am writing of; always provided that she does not bring three at once, like my lady Berkeley.

Well! I have here set you the example of writing nonsense when one has nothing to say, and shall take it ill if you don't keep up the correspondence on the same foot. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday night, Sept. 3, 1748.

All my sins to Mrs. Talbot you are to expiate; I am here quite alone, and want nothing but your fetching to go to her. I have been in town for a day just to see lord Bury, who is come over with the duke; they return next Thursday. The duke is fatter, and it is now not denied, that he has entirely lost the sight of one eye. This did not surprise me so much as a *bon mot* of his. Gumley,

who you know is grown methodist, came to tell him, that as he was on duty, a tree in Hyde-park near the powder magazine had been set on fire; the duke replied, he hoped it was not by *the new light*. This nonsensical *new light* is extremely in fashion, and I shall not be surprised if we see a revival of all the folly and cant of the last age. Whitfield preaches continually at my lady Huntingdon's[1] at Chelsea; my lord Chesterfield, my lord Bath, my lady Townshend, my lady Thanet, and others have been to hear him. What will you lay that next winter he is not run after instead of Garrick?

I am just come from the play at Richmond, where I found the duchess of Argyle and lady Betty Campbell and their court. We had a new actress, a Miss Clough; an extremely fine tall figure, and very handsome; she spoke very justly and with spirit. Garrick is to produce her next winter, and a Miss Charlotte Ramsay, a poetess and deplorable actress. Garrick, Barry, and some more of the players were there to see these new comedians; it is to be their seminary.

Since I came home I have been disturbed with a strange, foolish woman, that lives at the great corner house yonder; she is an attorney's wife, and much given to the bottle. By the time she

[1] Daughter of Washington, earl Ferrers.

has finished that and day-light, she grows afraid of thieves, and makes the servants fire minute guns out of the garret windows. I remember persuading Mrs. Kerwood that there was a great smell of thieves, and this drunken dame seems literally to smell it. The divine Asheton, whom I suppose you will have seen when you receive this, will give you an account of the astonishment we were in last night at hearing guns; I began to think that the duke had brought some of his defeats from Flanders.

I am going to tell you a long story, but you will please to remember that I don't intend to tell it well; therefore, if you discover any beauties in the relation where I never intended them, don't conclude, as you did in your last, that I know they are there. If I had not a great command of my pen, and could not force it to write whatever nonsense I had heard last, you would be enough to pervert all one's letters, and put one upon keeping up one's character; but as I write merely to satisfy you, I shall take no care but not to write well: I hate letters that are called good letters.

You must know then,—but did you know a young fellow that was called handsome Tracy? He was walking in the park with some of his acquaintance, and overtook three girls; one was very pretty; they followed them, but the girls ran away, and the company grew tired of pursu-

ing them, all but Tracy. (There are now three more guns gone off; she must be very drunk.) He followed to Whitehall gate, where he gave a porter a crown to dog them: the porter hunted them—he the porter. The girls ran all round Westminster, and back to the Haymarket, where the porter came up with them. He told the pretty one she must go with him, and kept her talking till Tracy arrived, quite out of breath, and exceedingly in love. He insisted on knowing where she lived, which she refused to tell him; and after much disputing, went to the house of one of her companions, and Tracy with them. He there made her discover her family, a butter-woman in Craven-street, and engaged her to meet him the next morning in the park; but before night he wrote her four love-letters, and in the last offered two hundred pounds a-year to her, and a hundred a-year to Signora la Madre. Griselda made a confidence to a staymaker's wife, who told her that the swain was certainly in love enough to marry her, if she could determine to be virtuous and refuse his offers. "Aye," says she, "but if I should, and should lose him by it." However the measures of the cabinet council were decided for virtue; and when she met Tracy the next morning in the park, she was convoyed by her sister and brother-in-law, and stuck close to the letter of her reputation. She would do nothing: she would go no where. At last, as an instance of

prodigious compliance, she told him, that if he would accept such a dinner as a butterwoman's daughter could give him, he should be welcome. Away they walked to Craven-street; the mother borrowed some silver to buy a leg of mutton, and they kept the eager lover drinking till twelve at night, when a chosen committee waited on the faithful pair to the minister of May-fair. The doctor was in bed, and swore he would not get up to marry the king, but that he had a brother over the way, who perhaps would, and who did. The mother borrowed a pair of sheets, and they consummated at her house; and the next day they went to their own palace. In two or three days the scene grew gloomy; and the husband coming home one night, swore he could bear it no longer. "Bear! bear what?"—"Why to be teazed by all my acquaintance for marrying a butterwoman's daughter. I am determined to go to France, and will leave you a handsome allowance."—"Leave me! why you don't fancy you shall leave me? I will go with you."—"What, you love me then?"—"No matter whether I love you or not, but you shan't go without me." And they are gone! If you know any body that proposes marrying and travelling, I think they cannot do it in a more commodious method.

I agree with you most absolutely in your opinion about Gray; he is the worst company in the world. From a melancholy turn, from living

reclusely, and from a little too much dignity, he never converses easily; all his words are measured and chosen, and formed into sentences; his writings are admirable; he himself is not agreeable.

There are still two months to London; if you could discover your own mind for any three or four days of that space, I will either go with you to the Tygers, or be glad to see you here, but I positively will ask you neither one nor t'other any more. I have raised seven-and-twenty bantams from the patriarchs you sent me. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 25, 1748.

I SHALL write you a very short letter, for I don't know what business we have to be corresponding when we might be together. I really wish to see you, for you know I am convinced of what you say to me. It is few people I ask to come hither, and if possible, still fewer that I wish to see here. The disinterestedness of your friendship for me has always appeared, and is the only sort that for the future I will ever accept, and consequently I never expect any more friends. As to trying to make any by obligations, I have had such woeful success, that for fear of thinking still worse

than I do of the world, I will never try more. But you are abominable to reproach me with not letting you go to Houghton; have not I offered a thousand times to carry you there? I mean since it was my brother's; I did not expect to prevail with you before, for you are so unaccountable, that you not only will never do a dirty thing, but you won't even venture the appearance of it. I have often applied to you in my own mind a very pretty passage, that I remember in a letter of Chillingworth; *you would not do that for preferment, that you would not do but for preferment.* You oblige me much in what you say about my nephews, and make me happy in the character you have heard of lord Malpas;[1] I am extremely inclined to believe he deserves it. I am as sorry to hear what a companion lord Walpole has got: there has been a good deal of noise about him, but I had laughed at it, having traced the worst reports to his gracious mother, who is now sacrificing the character of her son to her aversion for her husband. If we lived under the Jewish dispensation, how I should tremble at my brother's leaving no children by her, and its coming to my turn to raise him up issue!

Since I gave you the account of the duchess

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[1] Eldest son of George, third earl of Cholmondeley, and grandson of sir Robert Walpole.

of Ireland's piked horns among the tombs of the Veres, I have found a long account in Bayle of the friar, who, as I remember to have read somewhere, preached so vehemently against that fashion: it was called *Hennin*, and the monk's name was Thomas Conecte. He was afterwards burnt at Rome for censuring the lives of the clergy. As our histories say that Anne of Bohemia introduced the fashion here, it is probable that the French learnt it from us, and were either long before they caught it, or long in retaining the mode, for the duke of Ireland died in 1389, and Conecte was burnt at Rome in 1434. There were indeed several years between his preaching down *Hennins* and his death, but probably not near five-and-forty years, and half that term was a long duration for so outrageous a fashion. But I have found a still more entertaining fashion in another place in Bayle, which was, the women wearing looking-glasses upon their bellies: I don't conceive for what use. Adieu! don't write any more, but come.

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 6, 1748.

DEAR HARRY,

I AM sorry our wishes clash so much. Besides that I have no natural inclination for the parliament, it will particularly disturb me now in the middle of all my planting; for which reason I have never inquired when it will meet, and cannot help you to guess—but I should think not hastily—for I believe the peace, at least the evacuations are not in so prosperous a way as to be ready to make any figure in the king's speech. But I speak from a distance; it may all be very toward: our ministers enjoy the consciousness of their wisdom, as the good do of their virtue, and take no pains to make it shine before men. In the mean time we have several collateral emoluments from the pacification: all our milliners, taylors, tavern-keepers, and young gentlemen are tiding to France for our improvement and luxury; and as I foresee we shall be told on their return that we have lived in a total state of blindness for these six years, and gone absolutely retrograde to all true taste in every particular, I have already begun to practise walking on my head, and doing every thing the wrong way. Then Charles Frederick has turned all his virtù into fire-works, and, by his influence at the Ordnance, has prepared

such a spectacle for the proclamation of the peace as is to surpass all its predecessors of bouncing memory. It is to open with a concert of fifteen hundred hands, and conclude with so many hundred thousand crackers all set to music, that all the men killed in the war are to be wakened with the crash, as if it was the day of judgment, and fall a dancing, like the troops in the Rehearsal. I wish you could see him making squibs of his papillotes, and bronzed over with a patina of gunpowder, and talking himself still hoarser on the superiority that his firework will have over the Roman naumachia.

I am going to dinner with lady Sophia Thomas at Hampton court, where I was to meet the Cardigans; but I this minute receive a message that the duchess of Montagu[1] is extremely ill, which I am much concerned for on lady Cardigan's[2] account, whom I grow every day more in love with; you may imagine, not her person, which is far from improved lately: but since I have been here, I have lived much with them; and, as George Montagu says, *in all my practice* I never met a better understanding, nor more really estimable

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[1] She was mother to lady Cardigan, and daughter to the great duke of Marlborough.

[2] Lady Mary Montagu, third daughter of John duke of Montagu and wife of George Brudenell earl of Cardigan, afterwards created duke of Montagu.

qualities; such a dignity in her way of thinking, so little idea of any thing mean or ridiculous, and such proper contempt for both!

Adieu! I must go dress for dinner, and you perceive that I wish I had, but have nothing to tell you.

Yours ever.

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To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

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Strawberry-hill, Oct. 20, 1748.

You are very formal to send me a ceremonious letter of thanks; you see I am less punctilious, for having nothing to tell you, I did not answer your letter. I have been in the empty town for a day: Mrs. Muscovy and I cannot devise where you have planted jasmine; I am all plantation, and sprout away like any chaste nymph in the metamorphosis.

They say the old monarch at Hanover has got a new mistress; I fear he ought to have got * * * * * * * * * *

Now I talk of getting, Mr. Fox has got the ten thousand pound prize; and the Violette, as it is said, Coventry for a husband. It is certain that at the fine masquerade, he was following her, as she was under the countess's arm, who, pulling

off her glove, moved her wedding-ring up and down her finger, which it seems was to signify that no other terms would be accepted. It is the year for contraband marriages, though I do not find Fanny Murray's is certain. I liked her spirit in an instance I heard t'other night: she was complaining of want of money; sir Robert Atkins immediately gave her a twenty pound note; she said, "d—n your twenty pound, what does it signify?" clapped it between two pieces of bread and butter, and ate it. Adieu; nothing should make me leave off so shortly, but that my gardener waits for me, and you must allow that he is to be preferred to all the world.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 18, 1749.

DEAR GEORGE,

WHATEVER you hear of the Richmond fireworks, that is short of the prettiest entertainment in the world, don't believe it; I really never passed a a more agreeable evening. Every thing succeeded; all the wheels played in time; Frederick was fortunate, and all the world in good humour. Then for royalty—Mr. Anstis himself would have been glutted; there were all the Fitzes upon

earth, the whole court of St. Germain's, the duke,[1] the duke of Modena and two Anamaboes. The king and princess Emily bestowed themselves upon the mob on the river; and as soon as they were gone, the duke had the music into the garden, and himself, with my lady Lincoln, Mrs. Pitt, Peggy Banks, and lord Holderness, entertained the good subjects with singing God save the King to them over the rails of the terrace. The duke of Modena supped there, and the duke was asked, but he answered, it was impossible: in short, he could not adjust his dignity to a mortal banquet. There was an admirable scene: lady Burlington brought the Violette, and the Richmonds had asked Garrick, who stood ogling and sighing the whole time, while my lady kept a most fierce look out. Sabbatini, one of the duke of Modena's court was asking me, who all the people were? and who is that? "*C'est mi lady Hartington,*[2] *la belle fille du duc de Devonshire;*" "*et qui est cette autre dame!*" It was a distressing question; after a little hesitation I replied, "*mais c'est mademoiselle Violette? et comment mademoiselle Violette! j'ai connu une mademoiselle Violette par exemple.*"—I begged him to look at Miss Bishop.

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[1] The duke of Cumberland.

[2] Charlotte, daughter and heiress of Richard earl of Burlington and Corke, married in 1748 William marquis of Hartington, son of William the third duke of Devonshire.

In the middle of all these principalities and and powers was the duchess of Queensbury, in her forlorn trim, a white apron, and white hood, and would make the duke swallow all her undress. T'other day she drove post to lady Sophia Thomas, at Parsons-green, and told her that she was come to tell her something of importance. "What is it?"—"Why take a couple of beef-steaks, clap them together, as if they were for a dumpling, and eat them with pepper and salt; it is the best thing you ever tasted: I could not help coming to tell you this:" and away she drove back to town. Don't a course of folly for forty years make one very sick?

The weather is so hot, and the roads so dusty, that I can't get to Strawberry; but I shall begin negociating with you now about your coming. You must not expect to find it in beauty. I hope to get my bill finished in ten days; I have scrambled it through the lords; but altogether, with the many difficulties and plagues, I am a good deal out of humour; my purchases hitch, and new proprietors start out of the ground, like the crop of soldiers in the Metamorphosis. I expect but an unpleasant summer; my indolence and inattention are not made to wade through leases and deeds. Mrs. Chenevix brought me one yesterday to sign, and her sister Bertrand the toy woman of Bath for a witness. I shewed them my cabinet of enamels instead of treating them with

white wine. The Bertrand said, "Sir, I hope you don't trust all sorts of ladies with this cabinet!" What an entertaining assumption of dignity! I must tell you an anecdote that I found t'other day in an old French author, which is a great drawback on beaux sentiments and romantic ideas. Pasquier, in his *Recherches de la France*, is giving an account of the queen of Scots' execution; he says, the night before, knowing her body must be stripped for her shroud, she would have her feet washed, because she used ointment to one of them which was sore. I believe I have told you, that in a very old trial of her, which I bought from lord Oxford's collection, it is said that she was a large lame woman. Take sentiments out of their pantoufles, and reduce them to the infirmities of mortality, what a falling off there is! I could not help laughing in myself t'other day, as I went through Holborn in a very hot day, at the dignity of human nature; all those foul old clotheswomen panting without handkerchiefs, and mopping themselves all the way down within their loose jumps. Rigby gave me as strong a picture of nature; he and Peter Bathurst t'other night carried a servant of the latter's, who had attempted to shoot him, before Fielding;[3] who, to all his other vocations, has, by the grace of

[3] Henry Fielding, the novelist.

Mr. Lyttleton, added that of Middlesex justice. He sent them word he was at supper, that they must come next morning. They did not understand that freedom, and ran up, where they found him banquetting with a blind man, a w——, and three Irishmen, on some cold mutton and a bone of ham, both in one dish, and the dirtiest cloth. He never stirred nor asked them to sit. Rigby, who had seen him so often come to beg a guinea of sir C. Williams, and Bathurst, at whose father's he had lived for victuals, understood that dignity as little, and pulled themselves chairs, on which he civilized.

Millar the bookseller has done very generously by him: finding Tom Jones, for which he had given him six hundred pounds, sell so greatly, he has since given him another hundred. Now I talk to you of authors, lord Cobham's West has published his translation of Pindar; the poetry is very stiff, but prefixed to it there is a very entertaining account of the Olympic games, and that preceded by an affected inscription to Pitt and Lyttleton. The latter has declared his future match with miss Rich; George Grenville has been married these two days to miss Windham. Your friend lord North is, I suppose you know, on the brink with the countess of Rockingham;[1]

[1] Daughter of sir Robert Furnese, and widow of Lewis earl of Rockingham.

and I think your cousin Rice is much inclined to double the family alliance with her sister Furnese. It went on very currently for two or three days, but last night at Vauxhall his minionette face seemed to be sent to languish with lord R. Berties's.

Was not you sorry for poor Cucumber? I do assure you I was; it was shocking to be hurried away so suddenly, and in so much torment. You have heard I suppose of lord Harry Beauclerc's resignation, on his not being able to obtain a respite till November, though the lowest officer in his regiment has got much longer leave. It is incredible how Nolkejumskoi has persecuted this poor man for these four years, since he could not be persuaded to alter his vote at a court martial for the acquittal of a man whom the duke would have had condemned. Lord Ossulston too has resigned his commission.

I must tell you a good story of Charles Townshend; you know his political propensity and importance; his brother George was at supper at the King's Arms with some more young men. The conversation somehow or other rambled into politics, and it was started that the national debt was a benefit. "I am sure it is not," said Mr. Townshend; "I can't tell why, but my brother Charles can, and I will send to him for arguments." Charles was at supper at another tavern, but so much the dupe of this message, that he

literally called for ink and paper, wrote four long sides of arguments, and sent word that when his company broke up, he would come and give them more, which he did at one o'clock in the morning. I don't think you will laugh much less at what happened to me; I wanted a print out of a booth, which I did not care to buy at Osborn's shop; the next day he sent me the print, and begged that when I had any thing to publish, I would employ him.

I will now tell you, and finish this long letter, how I shocked Mr. Mackenzie inadvertently at Vauxhall; we had supped there a great party, and coming out, Mrs. More, who waits at the gate, said, "gentlemen and ladies will you walk in and hear the surprising alteration of voice;" I forgetting Mackenzie's connexions, and that he was formerly of the band, replied "no, I have seen patriots enough."

I intend this letter shall last you till you come to Strawberry-hill; one might have rolled it out into half a dozen. My best compliments to your sisters.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Mistley, July 5, 1749.

DEAR GEORGE,

I HAVE this moment received your letter, and it makes me very unhappy. You will think me a brute for not having immediately told you how glad I should be to see you and your sisters; but I trust that you will have seen Mrs. Boscawen, by whom I sent you a message to invite you to Strawberry-hill, when we should be returned from Roel and Mistley. I own my message had rather a cross air, but as you have retrieved all your crimes with me by your letter, I have nothing to do, but to make myself as well with you as you are with me. Indeed I am extremely unlucky, but I flatter myself that Messrs. Montagus will not drop their kind intention, as it is not in my power to receive it now: they will give me infinite pleasure by a visit; I stay there till Monday se'nnight; will that be too late to see you before your journey to Roel? You must all promise at least to be engaged to me at my return. If the least impediment happens afterwards, I shall conclude my brother has got you from me; you know jealousy is the mark of my family.

Mr. Rigby makes you a thousand compliments, and wishes you would ever think his Roel worth your seeing: you cannot imagine how he has im-

proved it! You have always heard me extravagant in the praises of the situation. He has demolished all his paternal intrenchments of walls and square gardens, opened lawns, swelled out a bow window, erected a portico, planted groves, stifled ponds, and flounced himself with flowering shrubs, and Kent fences. You may imagine that I have a little hand in all this. Since I came hither, I have projected a colonade to join his mansion to the offices, have been the death of a tree, that intercepted the view of a bridge, for which too I have drawn a white rail, and shall be an absolute travelling Jupiter at Baucis and Philemon's, for I have persuaded him to transform a cottage into a church, by exalting a spire upon the end of it, as Talbot has done. By the way I have dined at the Vineyard.[1] I dare not trust you with what I think, but I was a little disappointed. To-morrow we go to the ruins of the Abbey of St. Osyth; it is the seat of the Rochford's, but I never chose to go there while they were there. You will probably hear from Mr. L* * * (if in any pause of love he rests) that I am going to be first minister to the prince: in short I have occasioned great speculation, and diverted myself with the important mysteries that have been alembicked out of a trifle. In short, he had

[1] Mr. Chute's.

seen my *Ædes Walpolianæ* at sir Luke Schaubs, and sent by him to desire one. I sent him one bound quite in coronation robes, and went last Sunday to thank him for the honour. There were all the new knights of the garter. After the prince had whispered through every curl of lord Granville's periwig, he turned to me, and said such a crowd of civil things, that I did not know what to answer: commended the style and the quotations, said I had sent him back to his Livy, in short that there were but two things he disliked; one, that I had not given it to him of my own accord, and the other, that I had abused his friend Andrea del Sarto; and that he insisted when I came to town again, I should come and see two very fine ones, that he has lately bought, of that master. This drew on a very long conversation on painting, every word of which I suppose will be reported at the other court as a plan of opposition for the winter. Prince George was not there; when he went to receive the riband, the prince carried him to the closet door, where the duke of Dorset received and carried him. Ayscough, or Nugent, or some of the genius's had taught him a speech; the child began it, the * * * * cried "no, no;" when the boy had a little recovered his fright, he began again, but the same tremendous sounds were repeated, and the oration still-born.

I believe that soon I shall have a pleasanter tale to tell you; it is said my lady Anson, not content with the profession of absurdities she utters, (by the way one of her sayings, and extremely in the style of Mr. Lyttleton's making love, was, as she sat down to play at brag at the corner of a square table; lady Fitzwalter said she was sorry she had not better room; "oh! madam," said my lady Anson, "I can sit like a nightingale with my breast against a thorn)" in short, that not content with so much wit, she proposes to entertain the town to the tune of Doctors Commons. She does not mince her disappointments; here is an epigram that has been made on the subject.

As Anson his voyage to my lady was reading,
And recounting his dangers; thank God she's not breeding!
He came to the passage, where, like the old Roman,
He stoutly withstood the temptation of woman.
The baroness smiled; when continuing, he said,
"Think what terror must there fill the poor lover's head."
"Alack," quoth my lady, "he had nothing to fear,
Were that Scipio as harmless as you are my dear."

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 20, 1749.

I AM returned to my Strawberry and find it in such beauty, that I shall be impatient till I see you and your sisters here. They must excuse me if I don't marry for their reception, for it is said the Drax's have impeached fifteen more damsels, and till all the juries of matrons have finished their inquest, one shall not care to make one's choice: I was going to say, *throw one's handkerchief*, but at present that term would be a little equivocal.

As I came to town I was extremely entertained with some excursions I made out of the road in search of antiquities. At Layer Marney is a noble old remnant of the palace of the lords of Marney, with three very good tombs in the church well preserved. At Messing I saw an extreme fine window of painted glass in the church; it is the duties prescribed in the gospel of visiting the sick and prisoners, &c. I mistook, and called it the seven deadly sins. There is a very old tomb of sir Robert Messing, that built the church. The hall-place is a fragment of an old house belonging to lord Grimston;[1] lady Luckyn his mother, of

1 Sir Samuel Grimston, bart. left an heiress, who married sir Capel Luckyn, bart. Their son changed his name to Grimston, and was created a baron and a viscount.

fourscore and six, lives in it with an old son and daughter. The servant who shewed it told us much history of another brother that had been parson there: this history was entirely composed of the anecdotes of the doctor's drinking, who, as the man told us, had been *a blood*. There are some Scotch arms taken from the rebels in the fifteen, and many old coats of arms on glass brought from Newhall, which now belongs to Olmius. Mr. Conyers bought a window[2] there for only a hundred pounds, on which was painted Harry the eighth and one of his queens at full length: he has put it up at Copt-hall, a seat which he has bought that belonged to lord North and Grey. You see I persevere in my heraldry. T'other day the parson of Rigby's parish dined with us; he has conceived as high an opinion of my skill in genealogies, as if I could say the first chapter of Matthew by heart. R. drank my health to him, and that I might come to be garter king at arms; the poor man replied with great zeal, "*I wish he may with all my heart.*" Certainly I am born to preferment; I gave an old woman a penny once, who prayed that I might live to be lord mayor of London! What pleased me most in my travels was Dr. Sayer's parsonage at Witham, which, with Southcote's help, whose

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[2] This window is now in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster.

old Roman catholic father lives just by him, he has made one of the most charming villas in England. There are sweet meadows falling down a hill, and rising again on t'other side of the prettiest little winding stream you ever saw.

You did not at all surprise me with the relation of the keeper's brutality to your family, or of his master's to the dowager's handmaid. His savage temper increases every day. George Boscawen is in a scrape with him by a court martial, of which he is one; it was appointed on a young poor soldier, who to see his friends had counterfeited a furlough only for a day. They ordered him two hundred lashes; but Nolkejumskoi, who loves blood like a leach, insisted it was not enough —has made them sit three times (though every one adheres to the first sentence), and swears they shall sit these six months till they increase the punishment. The fair Mrs. Pitt has been mobbed in the park and with difficulty rescued by some gentlemen, only because this bashaw is in love with her. You heard I suppose of his other amour with the Savoyard girl. He sent her to Windsor and offered her a hundred pounds, which she refused because he was a heretic; he sent her back on foot. Inclosed is a new print on this subject, which I think has more humour than I almost ever saw in one of that sort.

Should I not condole with you upon the death

of the head of the Cues?[3] If you have not heard his will, I will tell you. The settled estate of eight thousand a-year is to go between the two daughters, out of which is a jointure of three thousand a-year to the duchess dowager, and to that he has added a thousand more out of the unsettled estate, which is nine thousand. He gives, together with his blessing, four thousand per annum rent charge to the duchess of Manchester in present, provided she will contest nothing with her sister, who is to have all the rest, and the reversion of the whole after lady Cardigan and her children; but in case she disputes, lady Hinchingbrook and her's are in the entail next to the Cardigans, who are to take the Montagu name and livery. I don't know what Mr. Hussey will think of the blessing, but they say his duchess will be inclined to mind it; she always wanted to be well with her father, but hated her mother. There are two codicils, one in favour of his servants, and the other of his dogs, cats, and creatures, which was a little unnecessary, for lady Cardigan has exactly his turn for saving every thing's life. As he was making the codicil, one of his cats jumped on his knee; "*what,*" says he, "*have you a mind to be a witness too! You can't for you are a party concerned.*"

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[3] John duke of Montagu.

Lord Stafford is going to send his poor wife with one maid and one horse to a farm house in Shropshire for ever. The Mirepoix's are come, but I have not yet seen them. A thousand compliments to your sisters.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, August 26, 1749.

DEAR GEORGE,

I FLATTER myself that you are quite recovered of your disorder, and that your sisters will not look with an evil eye on Strawberry-hill. Mr. Chute and I are returned from our expedition miraculously well, considering all our distresses. If you love good roads, conveniences, good inns, plenty of postillions and horses, be so kind as never to go into Sussex. We thought ourselves in the northest part of England; the whole country has a Saxon air, and the inhabitants are savage, as if king George the second was the first monarch of the East Angles. Coaches grow there no more than balm and spices; we were forced to drop our post-chaise, that resembled nothing so much as harlequin's calash, which was occasionally a chaise or a baker's cart. We journeyed over Alpine mountains, drenched in clouds, and thought of harle-

quin again, when he was driving the chariot of the sun through the morning clouds, and so was glad to hear the *aqua vitæ* man crying a dram. At last we got to Arundel-castle, which was visibly built for defence in an impracticable country. It is now only a heap of ruins, with a new indifferent apartment clapt up for the Norfolks, when they reside there for a week or a fortnight. Their priest shewed us about. There are the walls of a round tower where a garrison held out against Cromwell; he planted a battery on the top of the church, and reduced them. There is a gloomy gateway and dungeons, in one of which I conclude is kept the old woman, who, in the time of the late rebellion, offered to shew lord R. Sutton where arms were hidden at Worksop.[1] The duchess complimented him into dining before his search, and in the mean time the woman was spirited away, and adieu the arms. There are fine monuments of the old Fitzalans, earls of Arundel, in the church. Mr. Chute, whom I have created *Strawberry king at arms*, has had brave sport *à la chasse aux armes*.

We were charmed with the magnificence of the park at Petworth,[2] which is Percy to the back

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[1] A seat of the duke of Norfolk in Nottinghamshire.

[2] A seat of sir Charles Wyndham, who succeeded to the title of earl of Egremont on the death of his uncle Algernon duke of Somerset.

bone; but the house and garden did not please our antiquarian spirit. The house is entirely new fronted in the style of the Tuilleries, and furnished exactly like Hampton-court. There is one room gloriously flounced all round whole length pictures with much the finest carving of Gibbins that ever my eyes beheld. There are birds absolutely feathered, and two antique vases with bas relieves, as perfect and beautiful, as if they were carved by a Grecian master. There is a noble Claude Lorrain, a very curious picture of the haughty Anne Stanhope, the protector's wife, pretty, but not giving one an idea of her character, and many old portraits; but the housekeeper was at London, and we did not learn half. The chapel is grand and proper. At the inn we entertained ourselves with the landlord, whom my lord Harvey had cabineted, when he went to woo one of the lady Seymours.

Our greatest pleasure was seeing Cowdry, which is repairing; lord Montacute[3] will at last live in it. We thought of old Margaret of Clarence, who lived there; one of her accusations was built on the bulls found there. It was the palace of her great uncle, the marquis Montacute. I was charmed with the front, and the court, and

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[3] Anthony, the sixth viscount Montagu, descended from Anthony Brown, created viscount Montagu in 1554, being descended from John Neville, marquis of Montagu.

the fountain; but the room called Holbein's, except the curiosity of it, is wretchedly painted, and infinitely inferior to those delightful stories of Harry the eighth in the private apartment at Windsor. I was much pleased with a whole-length picture of sir Anthony Brown in the very dress, in which he wedded Anne of Cleves by proxy. He is in blue and white, only his right leg is entirely white, which was certainly robed for the act of putting into bed to her; but when the king came to marry her, he only put his leg into bed to kick her out of it.

I have set up my staff, and finished my pilgrimages for this year. Sussex is a great damper of curiosity. Adieu! my compliments to your sisters.

Yours ever,

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 28, 1749.

I AM much obliged to you, dear sir, and agree with your opinion about the painting of prince Edward, that it cannot be original and authentic, and consequently not worth copying. Lord Cholmondeley is indeed an original; but who are the wise people that build for him? Sir Philip Harvey seems to be the only person likely to be benefited by this new extravagance. I have just

seen a collection of tombs like those you describe; the house of Russel robed in alabaster and painted: there are seven monuments in all; one is immense, in marble, cherubim'd and seraphim'd, crusted with bas-reliefs and titles, for the first duke of Bedford and his duchess.[1] All these are in a chapel of the church at Cheneys, the seat of the first earls. There are but piteous fragments of the house remaining, now a farm, built round three sides of a court. It is dropping down in several places without a roof, but in half the windows are beautiful arms in painted glass. As these are so totally neglected, I propose making a push, and begging them of the duke of Bedford. They would be magnificent for Strawberry-castle. Did I tell you that I have found a text in Deuteronomy to authorize my future battlements? *When thou buildest a new house, then shalt thou make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, if any man fall from thence.*

I saw Cheneys at a visit I have been making to Harry Conway at Latimers. This house, which they have hired, is large, and bad, and old, but of a bad age; finely situated on a hill in a beech wood, with a river at the bottom, and a range of hills and woods on the opposite side belonging to the duke of Bedford. They are fond of it; the

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[1] Anne daughter of Robert Carr, earl of Somerset.

view is melancholy. In the church at Cheneys Mr. Conway put on an old helmet we found there; you cannot imagine how it suited him, how antique and handsome he looked; you would have taken him for Rinaldo. Now I have dipped you so deep in heraldry and genealogies, I shall beg you to step into the church of Stoke; I know it is not asking you to do a disagreeable thing to call there; I want an account of the tomb of the first earl of Huntingdon, an ancestor of mine, who lies there. I asked Gray, but he could tell me little about it. You know how out of humour Gray has been about our diverting ourselves with pedigrees, which is at least as wise, as making a serious point of haranguing against the study; I believe neither Mr. Chute nor I ever contracted a moment's vanity from any of our discoveries, or ever preferred them to any thing but brag and whist. Well, Gray has set himself to compute, and has found out that there must go a million of ancestors in twenty generations to every body's composition.

I dig and plant till it is dark; all my works are revived and proceeding. When will you come and assist? You know I have an absolute promise, and shall now every day expect you. My compliments to your sisters.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 15, 1750.

THE high bailiff, after commending himself and his own impartiality for an hour this morning, not unlike your cousin Pelham, has declared lord Trentham.[1] The mob declare they will pull his house down to shew their impartiality. The princess has luckily produced another boy, so sir George Vandeput may be recompensed with being godfather. I stand to-morrow, not for member, but for godfather to my sister's girl, with Mrs. Selwyn and old Dunch; were ever three such dowagers? when shall three such meet again? If the babe has not a most sentimentally yellow complexion after such sureties, I will burn my books, and never answer for another skin.

You have heard, I suppose, that Nugent must answer a little more seriously for lady Lymington's child. Why, she was as ugly as Mrs. Nugent, had had more children, and was not so young. The pleasure of wronging a woman, who had bought him so dear, could be the only temptation.

Adieu! I have told you all I know, and as

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[1] Lord viscount Trentham, son of John earl of Gower, and married to lady Louisa Egerton, sister of the duke of Bridgewater.

much is scandal, very possibly more than is true. I go to Strawberry on Saturday, and so shall not know even scandal.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, June 23, 1750.

DEAR GEORGE,

As I am not Vanneck'd, I have been in no hurry to thank you for your congratulation, and to assure you, that I never knew what solid happiness was till I was married. Your Trevors and Rices dined with me last week at Strawberry-hill, and would have had me answer you upon the matrimonial tone, but I thought I should imitate cheerfulness in that style as ill as if I were really married. I have had another of your friends with me here some time, whom I adore, Mr. Bentley;[1] he has more sense, judgment, and wit, more taste, and more misfortunes than sure ever met in any man. I have heard that Dr. Bentley, regretting his want of taste for all such learning as his, which is the very want of taste, used to sigh and say, "Tully had his Marcus." If the sons resembled,

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[1] Son of Dr. Bentley.

as much as the fathers did, at least in vanity, I would be the modest, agreeable Marcus. Mr. Bentley tells me that you press him much to visit you at Hawkhurst. I advise him, and assure him he will make his fortune under you there; that you are an agent from the board of trade to the smugglers, and wallow in contraband wine, tea, and silk handkerchiefs. I found an old newspaper t'other day, with a list of outlawed smugglers; there were John Price, alias Miss Marjoram, Bob Plunder, Bricklayer Tom, and Robin Cursemother, all of Hawkhurst, in Kent. When Miss Harriot is thoroughly hardened at Buxton, as I hear she is by lying in a public room with the whole wells, from drinking waters, I conclude she will come to sip nothing but new brandy.

As jolly and as abominable a life as she may have been leading, I defy all her enormities to equal a party of pleasure that I had t'other night. I shall relate it to you to shew you the manners of the age, which are always as entertaining to a person fifty miles off, as to one born an hundred and fifty years after the time. I had a card from lady Caroline Petersham to go with her to Vauxhall. I went accordingly to her house, and found her and the little Ashe, or the pollard Ashe, as they call her; they had just finished their last layer of red, and looked as handsome as crimson could make them. On the cabinet-door stood a pair of Dresden candlesticks, a present from the

virgin hands of sir John Bland, the branches of each formed a little bower over a cock and hen treading; yes, literally. We issued into the mall to assemble our company, which was all the town, if we could get it; for just so many had been summoned, except Harry Vane, whom we met by chance. We mustered the duke of Kingston, whom lady Caroline says she has been trying for these seven years; but alas! his beauty is at the fall of the leaf; lord March, Mr. Whithead, a pretty Miss Beauclerc, and a very foolish Miss Sparre. These two damsels were trusted by their mothers for the first time of their lives to the matronly care of lady Caroline. As we sailed up the mall with all our colours flying, lord Petersham, with his hose and legs twisted to every point of crossness, strode by us on the outside, and repassed again on the return. At the end of the mall she called to him: he would not answer; she gave a familiar spring, and between laugh and confusion ran up to him, "my lord, my lord, why you don't see us!" We advanced at a little distance, not a little awkward in expectation how all this would end, for my lord never stirred his hat, or took the least notice of any body; she said, "do you go with us, or are *you going any where else?*" "I don't go with you, I am going *somewhere else;*" and away he stalked, as sulky as a ghost that nobody will speak to first. We got into the best order we could, and marched to our

barge with a boat of French horns attending, and little Ashe singing. We paraded some time up the river, and at last debarked at Vauxhall: there, if we had so pleased, we might have had the vivacity of our party increased by a quarrel; for a Mrs. Loyd, who is supposed to be married to lord Haddington, seeing the two girls following lady Petersham and miss Ashe, said aloud, "poor girls, I am sorry to see them in such bad company." Miss Sparre, who desired nothing so much as the fun of seeing a duel; a thing which, though she is fifteen, she has never been so lucky to see, took due pains to make lord March resent this: but he, who is very lively and agreeable, laughed her out of this charming frolic with a great deal of humour. Here we picked up lord Granby, arrived very drunk from Jenny's whim, where, instead of going to old Strafford's catacombs to make honourable love, he had dined with lady Fanny, and left her and eight other women and four other men playing at brag. He would fain have made over his honourable love upon any terms to poor miss Beauclerc, who is very modest, and did not know at all what to do with his whispers or his hands. He then addressed himself to the Sparre, who was very well disposed to receive both, but the tide of champagne turned, he hiccupped at the reflection of his marriage (of which he is wondrous sick), and only proposed to the girl to shut themselves up and rail at the world

for three weeks. If all the adventures don't conclude as you expect in the beginning of a paragraph, you must not wonder, for I am not making a history, but relating one strictly as it happened, and I think with full entertainment enough to content you. At last we assembled in our booth, lady Caroline in the front, with the vizor of her hat erect, and looking gloriously jolly and handsome. She had fetched my brother Orford from the next box, where he was enjoying himself with his *petite partie*, to help us to mince chickens. We minced seven chickens into a china dish, which lady Caroline stewed over a lamp with three pats of butter and a flagon of water, stirring, and rattling, and laughing, and we every minute expecting to have the dish fly about our ears. She had brought Betty the fruit girl with hampers of strawberries and cherries from Rogers's, and made her wait upon us, and then made her sup by us at a little table. The conversation was no less lively than the whole transaction. There was a Mr. O'Brien arrived from Ireland, who would get the duchess of Manchester from Mr. Hussey, if she were still at liberty. I took up the biggest hautboy in the dish, and said to lady Caroline, "*madam, miss Ashe desires you would eat this O'Brien strawberry;*" she replied immediately, "*I won't, you hussey.*" You may imagine the laugh this reply occasioned. After the tempest was a little calmed, the Pollard said, "now how

any body would spoil this story that was to repeat it, and say, I won't you jade!" In short, the whole air of our party was sufficient, as you will easily imagine, to take up the whole attention of the garden; so much so, that from eleven o'clock till half an hour after one we had the whole concourse round our booth: at last they came into the little gardens of each booth on the sides of ours, till Harry Vane took up a bumper, and drank their healths, and was proceeding to treat them with still greater freedom. It was three o'clock before we got home. I think I have told you the chief passages. Lord Granby's temper had been a little ruffled the night before: the prince had invited him and Dick Lyttleton to Kew, where he won eleven hundred pounds of the latter, and eight of the former, then cut, and told them he would play with them no longer, for he saw they played so idly, that they were capable of *losing more than they would like.*

Adieu! I expect in return for this long tale, that you will tell me some of your frolics with Robin Cursemother, and some of miss Marjoram's bon mots.

Yours ever.

P. S. Dr. Middleton called on me yesterday; he is come to town to consult his physician for a jaundice, and swelled legs, symptoms, which the doctor tells him, and which he believes, can be

easily cured; I think him visibly broke, and near his end. He lately advised me to marry, on the sense of his own happiness; but if any body had advised theirs to the contrary, at his time of life, I believe he would not have broke so soon.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, September 10, 1750.

You must not pretend to be concerned at having missed one here, when I had repeatedly begged you to let me know what day you would call; and even after you had learnt that I was to come the next day, you paraded by my house with all your matrimonial streamers flying, without even saluting the future castle. To punish this slight, I shall accept your offer of a visit on the return of your progress; I shall be here and Mrs. Leneve will not.

I feel for the poor Handasyde. If I wanted examples for to deter one from making all the world happy, from obliging, from being always in good humour and spirits, she should be my memento. You find long wise faces every day, that tell you riches cannot make one happy. No, can't they? What pleasantry is that poor woman fallen from! and what a joyous feel must Vanneck have expired in, who could call and think the

two Schutzs his friends, and leave five hundred pounds a piece to their friendship: nay, riches made him so happy, that in the overflowing of his satisfaction, he has bequeathed a hundred pounds a piece to eighteen fellows, whom he calls his good friends, that favoured him with their company on Fridays. He took it mighty kind that captain James de Normandie, and twenty such names, that came out of the Minories, would constrain themselves to live upon him once a week.

I should like to visit the castles and groves of your old Welsh ancestors with you; by the draughts I have seen, I have always imagined that Wales preserved the greatest remains of ancient days, and have often wished to visit Picton castle, the seat of my Philipps-progenitors.

Make my best compliments to your sisters, and with their leave make haste to this side of the world; you will be extremely welcome hither as soon and for as long as you like; I can promise you nothing very agreeable, but that I will try to get our favourite Mr. Bentley to meet you.—Adieu,

Yours very sincerely,

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 30, 1751.

Mrs. Boscawen says I ought to write to you: I don't think so: you desired I would, if I had any thing new to tell you; I have not. Lady Caroline and miss Ashe, had quarrelled about reputations before you went out of town. I suppose you would not give a straw to know all the circumstances of a Mr. Paul killing a Mr. Dalton, though the town, who talks of any thing, talks of nothing else. Mrs. French and her Jeffery are parted again. Lady Orford and Shirley married; they say she was much frightened; it could not be for fear of what other brides dread happening, but for fear it should not happen.

My evening yesterday was employed, how wisely do you think? in trying to procure for the duchess of Portland a scarlet spider from admiral Boscawen. I had just seen her collection, which is indeed magnificent, chiefly composed of the spoils of her fathers, and the Arundel collections. The gems of all sorts are glorious. I was diverted with two relics of St. Charles the martyr; one the pearl, you see in his pictures, taken out of his ear after his foolish head was off; the other the cup, out of which he took his last sacrament. They should be given to that nursery of nonsense and bigotry, Oxford.

I condole with you on your journey, am glad miss Montagu is in better health, and am

Yours sincerely.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, June 13, 1751.

You have told me that it is charity to write you news into Kent; but what if my news should shock you! Won't it rather be an act of cruelty to tell you, your relation, Sandwich,[1] is immediately to be removed, and that the duke of Bedford, and all the Gowers will resign to attend him. Not quite all the Gowers, for the earl himself keeps the privy seal and plays on at brag with lady Catherine Pelham, to the great satisfaction of the Staffordshire Jacobites, who desire, at least expect no better diversion, than a division in that house. Lord Trentham does resign. Lord Hartington is to be master of the horse and called up to the house of peers. Lord Granville is to be president; if he should resent any former resignations and insist on victims, will lord Harrington assure the menaced that they shall not be sacrificed.

I hear your friend lord North is wedded; some-

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[1] John Montagu, fourth earl of Sandwich.

body said it is very hot weather to marry so fat a bride; George Selwyn replied, "oh! she was kept in ice for three days before."

The first volume of Spencer is published with prints, designed by Kent; but the most execrable performance you ever beheld. The graving not worse than the drawing; awkward knights, scrambling Unas, hills tumbling down themselves, no variety of prospect, and three or four perpetual spruce firs.

Our charming Mr. Bentley is doing Gray as much more honour as he deserves than Spencer. He is drawing vignettes for his odes; what a valuable MS. I shall have! Warburton publishes his edition of Pope next week, with the famous piece of prose on lord Hervey, which he formerly suppressed at my uncle's desire, who had got an abbey from cardinal Fleury for one Southcote, a friend of Pope's. My lord Hervey pretended not to thank him. I am told the edition has waited, because Warburton has cancelled above a hundred sheets (in which he had inserted notes) since the publication of the canons of criticism. The new history of Christina is a most wretched piece of trumpery, stuffed with foolish letters and confutations of mademoiselle de Montpensier and madame de Motteville. Adieu,

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Daventry, July 22, 1751.

You will wonder in what part of the county of Twicks lies this Daventry. It happens to be in Northamptonshire. My letter will scarce set out till I get to London, but I choose to give it its present date lest you should admire, that Mr. Usher of the exchequer, the lord treasurer of pen, ink, and paper, should write with such coarse materials. I am on my way from Ragley,[1] and if ever the waters subside and my ark rests upon dry land again, I think of stepping over to Tonghes: but your journey has filled my postchaise's head with such terrible ideas of your roads, that I think I shall let it have done raining for a month or six weeks, which it has not done for as much time past, before I begin to grease my wheels again, and lay in a provision of French books, and tea, and blunderbusses for my journey.

Before I tell you a word of Ragley you must hear how busy I have been upon Grammont. You know I have long had a purpose of a new edition with notes and cuts of the principal beauties and heroes, if I could meet with their portraits. I have made out all the people at all remarkable

[1] The seat of the earl of Hertford.

except *mi lord Janet*, whom I cannot divine unless he be *Thanet*. Well, but what will entertain you is, that I have discovered the *philosophe Whitnell*; and what do you think his real name was? Only Whetenhall! Pray do you call cousins?[2] Look in Collin's Baronets, and under the article *Bedingfield* you will find that he was an *ingenious gentleman*, and *la blanche* Whitnell, *though one of the greatest beauties of the age, an excellent wife*. I am persuaded the Bedingfields crowded in these characters to take off the ridicule in Grammont: they have succeeded to a miracle. Madame de Mirepoix told me t'other day, that she had known a daughter of the countess de Grammont, an abbess in Lorrain, who, to the embassadress's great scandal, was ten times more vain of the blood of Hamilton than of an equal quantity of that of Grammont. She had told her much of her sister my lady Stafford,[3] whom I remember to have seen when I was a child. She used to live at Twickenham when lady Mary Wortley[4] and the duke of Wharton lived there; she had more wit than both of them. What would I give to have

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[2] A sister of Mr. Montagu's, was married to Nathaniel Whetenhall, esq.

[3] Claude Charlotte, countess of Stafford, wife of Henry earl of Stafford, and daughter of Philibert, count of Grammont, and Elizabeth Hamilton his wife.

[4] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

had Strawberry-hill twenty years ago! I think any thing but twenty years. Lady Stafford used to say to her sister, "Well, child, I have come without my wit to-day;" that is, she had not taken her opium, which she was forced to do if she had any appointment, to be in particular spirits. This rage of Grammont carried me a little while ago to old Marlborough's[5] at Wimbledon, where I had heard there was a picture of Lady Denham; it is a charming one. The house you know stands in a hole, or as the whimsical old lady said, seems to be making a curtsey. She had directed my lord Pembroke not to make her go up any steps; "*I won't go up steps;*"—and so he dug a saucer to put it in, and levelled the first floor with the ground. There is a bust of admiral Vernon, erected I suppose by Jack Spencer, with as many lies upon it as if it was a tombstone; and a very curious old picture up stairs that I take to be Louis Sforza the Moor, with his nephew Galeazzo. There are other good pictures in the house, but perhaps you have seen them. As I have formerly seen Oxford and Blenheim, I did not stop till I came to Stratford-upon-Avon, the wretchedest old town I ever saw, which I intended for Shakspeare's sake to find snug, and pretty,

[5] Sarah, dutchess of Marlborough.

and antique, not old. His tomb, and his wife's, and John à Combes, are in an agreeable church, with several other monuments; as one of the earl of Totness, and another of sir Edward Walker the memoirs' writer. There are quantities of Cloptons too; but the bountiful corporation have exceedingly bepainted Shakspeare and the principal personages.

I was much struck with Ragley; the situation is magnificent; the house far beyond any thing I have seen of that bad age: for it was begun, as I found by an old letter in the library from lord Ranelagh to earl Conway, in the year 1680. By the way, I have had and am to have the rummaging of three chests of pedigrees and letters to that secretary Conway, which I have interceded for and saved from the flames. The prospect is as fine, as one destitute of a navigated river can be, and hitherto totally unimproved; so is the house, which is but just covered in, after so many years. They have begun to inhabit the naked walls of the attic story; the great one is unfloored and unceiled; the hall is magnificent, sixty by forty, and thirty-eight high. I am going to pump Mr. Bentley for designs. The other apartments are very lofty, and in quantity, though I had suspected that this Leviathan hall must have devoured half the other chambers.

The Hertfords carried me to dine at lord Ar-

cher's,[6] an odious place. On my return I saw Warwick, a pretty old town, small, and thinly inhabited, in the form of a cross. The castle is enchanting; the view pleased me more than I can express; the river Avon tumbles down a cascade at the foot of it. It is well laid out by one Brown, who has set up on a few ideas of Kent and Mr. Southcote. One sees what the prevalence of taste does; little Brooke, who would have chuckled to have been born in an age of clipt hedges and cockle-shell avenues, has submitted to let his garden and park be natural. Where he has attempted gothic in the castle, he has failed; and has indulged himself in a new apartment, that is paltry. The chapel is very pretty, and smugged up with tiny pews, that look like *etuis* for the earl and his diminutive countess. I shall tell you nothing of the glorious chapel of the Beauchamps in St. Mary's church, for you know it is in Dugdale; nor how ill the fierce bears and ragged staves are succeeded by puppets and corals. As I came back another road, I saw lord Pomfret's,[7] by Towcester, where there are a few good pictures, and many masked statues; there is an exceeding fine Cicero, which has no fault, but the head being modern. I saw a pretty lodge just built by the

6 Amberslade, near Stratford-upon-Avon.

7 Easton Neston.

duke of Grafton in Whittleberry-forest; the design is Kent's, but, as was his manner, too heavy. I ran through the gardens at Stowe,[8] which I have seen before, and had only time to be charmed with the variety of scenes. I do like that Albano glut of buildings, let them be ever so much condemned.

Adieu, yours.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Oct. 8, 1751.

So you have totally forgot that I sent you the pedigree of the Crouches, as long ago as the middle of last August, and that you promised to come to Strawberry-hill in October. I shall be there some time in next week, but as my motions neither depend on resolutions nor almanacks, let me know before hand when you intend me a visit; for though keeping an appointment is not just the thing you ever do, I suppose you know you dislike being disappointed yourself as much, as if you were the most punctual person in the world to engagements.

I came yesterday from Woburn, where I have

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[8] The seat of earl Temple.

been a week. The house is in building, and three sides of the quadrangle finished. The park is very fine, the woods glorious; and the plantations of evergreens sumptuous; but upon the whole, it is rather what I admire than like—I fear that is what I am a little apt to do at the finest places in the world where there is not a navigable river. You would be charmed, as I was, with an old gallery, that is not yet destroyed. It is a bad room, powdered with little gold stars, and covered with millions of old portraits. There are all the successions of earls and countesses of Bedford and all their progenies. One countess is a whole-length drawing in the drollest dress you ever saw; and another picture of the same woman leaning on her hand, I believe by Cornelius Johnson, is as fine a head as ever I saw. There are many of queen Elizabeth's worthies, the Leicesters, Essexs, and Philip Sidneys, and a very curious portrait of the last Courtney, earl of Devonshire, who died at Padua. Have not I read somewhere that he was in love with queen Elizabeth, and queen Mary with him? He is quite in the style of the former's lovers, red bearded, and not comely. There is Essex's friend, the earl of Southampton, his son the lord treasurer, and madame l'Empoisonneuse,[1]

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[1] Lady Frances Howard, daughter of the earl of Suffolk, and

that married Carr,[2] earl of Somerset—she is pretty. Have not you seen a copy Vertue has made of Philip and Mary? That is in this gallery too, but more curious than good. They shewed me two heads, who, according to the tradition of the family, were the originals of Castalio and Polidore. They were sons to the second earl of Bedford, and the eldest, if not both, died before their father. The eldest has vipers in his hand, and in the distant landscape appears in a maze, with these words, *Fata viam invenient.* The other has a woman behind him, sitting near the sea, with strange monsters surrounding her. I don't pretend to decypher this, nor to describe half the entertaining morsels I found here; but I can't omit, as you know I am Grammont-mad, that I found *le vieux Roussel, qui étoit le plus fier danseur d'Angleterre.* The portrait is young, but has all the promise of his latter character. I am going to send them a head of a countess of Cumberland,[3] sister to Castalio and

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married to the earl of Essex, from whom she was divorced. She then married her lover, the earl of Somerset. She poisoned sir Thomas Overbury, because he had endeavoured to dissuade his friend the earl of Somerset from this alliance. She was tried and condemned, but was pardoned by king James.

[2] Robert Carr, a favourite of king James the first, who created him viscount Rochester, and earl of Somerset.

[3] Margaret, countess of Cumberland, daughter of Francis

Polidore, and mother of a famous countess of Dorset,[4] who afterwards married the earl of Pembroke,[5] of Charles the first's time. She was an authoress, and immensely rich. After the restoration, sir Joseph Williamson, the secretary of state, wrote to her to choose a courtier at Appleby: she sent him this answer: "I have been bullied by an usurper, I have been ill-treated by a court, but I won't be dictated to by a subject; your man shall not stand. Anne Dorset Pembroke and Montgomery." Adieu! if you love news a hundred years old, I think you can't have a better correspondent. For any thing that passes now, I shall not think it worth knowing these fifty years.

Yours ever.

Russel, second earl of Bedford, and married to George Clifford, third earl of Cumberland.

4 Anne Clifford, daughter of George earl of Cumberland, first married to Richard Sackville, earl of Dorset, and afterwards to Philip earl of Pembroke.

5 Philip earl of Pembroke, son of Henry second earl of Pembroke. He was chamberlain to Charles the first.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

THE ST. JAMES'S EVENING POST,

Thursday, Jan. 9, 1752.

MONDAY being the twelfth day, his majesty according to annual custom offered myrrh, frankincense, and a small bit of gold; and at night, in commemoration of the three *kings* or *wise men*, the king and royal family played at hazard for the benefit of a prince of the blood. There were above eleven thousand pounds upon the table; his most sacred majesty won three guineas, and his R. H. the duke three thousand four hundred pounds.

On Saturday was landed at the Custom-house a large box of truffles, being a present to the earl of Lincoln from Theobald Taaffe, Esq. who is shortly expected home from his travels in foreign parts.

To-morrow the new-born son of the earl of Egremont is to be baptized, when his majesty, and the earl of Granville (if he is able to stand) and the duchess of Somerset are to be sponsors.

We are assured that on Tuesday last, the surprising strong woman was exhibited at the countess of Holderness's, before a polite assembly of persons of the first quality: and some time this

week, the two dwarfs will play at brag at madam Holman's. N. B. The strong man, who was to have performed at Mrs. Nugent's, is indisposed.

There is lately arrived at the lord Carpenter's, a curious male chimparozee, which had had the honour of being shewn before the ugliest princes in Europe, who all expressed their approbation; and we hear that he intends to offer himself a candidate to represent the city of Westminster at the next general election. Note: he wears breeches, and there is a gentlewoman to attend the ladies.

Last night the Hon. and Rev. Mr. James Brudenel was admitted a doctor of opium in the ancient university of Whites, being received *ad eundem* by his grace the Rev. father in chess the duke of Devonshire, president, and the rest of the senior fellows. At the same time the lord Robert Bertie and colonel Barrington were rejected, on account of some deficiency of formality in their testimonials.

Letters from Grosvenor-street mention a dreadful apparition, which has appeared for several nights at the house of the countess Temple, which has occasioned several of her ladyship's domestics to leave her service, except the coachman, who has drove her sons and nephews for several years, and is not afraid of spectres. The coroner's inquest have brought in their verdict lunacy.

Last week the lord Downe received at the trea-

sury the sum of a hundred kisses from the auditor of the exchequer, being the reward for shooting at a highwayman.

On Tuesday the operation of shaving was happily performed on the upper lip of her grace the dutchess of N****, by a celebrated artist from Paris, sent over on purpose by the earl of Albermarle. The performance lasted but one minute and three seconds, to the great joy of that noble family; and in consideration of his great care and expedition, his grace has settled four hundred pounds a year upon him for life. We hear that he is to have the honour of shaving the heads of the lady Caroline Petersham, the duchess of Queensbury, and several other persons of quality.

By authority, on Sunday next will be opened the Romish chapel at Norfolk house; no persons will be admitted, but such as are known well wishers to the present happy establishment.

Mass will begin exactly when the English liturgy is finished.

At the theatre royal in the house of lords, the Royal Slave, with Lethe.

At the theatre in St. Stephen's chapel, the Fool in Fashion.

The Jews are desired to meet on the 20th inst. at the sign of Fort L'Eveque in Pharaoh-street, to commemorate the noble struggle made by one of their brethren in support of his property.

Deserted—miss Ashe.

Lost—an opposition.

To be let—an embassador's masquerade, the gentleman going abroad.

To be sold—the whole nation.

Lately published, the analogy of political and private quarrels, or the art of healing family-differences by widening them; on these words, *do evil that good may ensue;* a sermon preached before the right Hon. Henry Pelham, and the rest of the society for propagating Christian charity, by William Levenson, chaplain to her R. H. the princess Amelia; and now printed at the desire of several of the family.

For capital weaknesses, the duke of Newcastle's true spirit of crocodiles.

Given gratis at the Turn-stile, the corner of Lincoln's-inn-fields, Anodyne Stars and Garters.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 12, 1752.

You deserve no charity, for you never write but to ask it. When you are tired of yourself and the country, you think over all London, and consider who will be proper to send you an account of it. Take notice, I won't be your gazetteer; nor is my time come for being a dowager, a maker of news, a day labourer in scandal. If you

care for nobody but for what they can tell you, you must provide yourself elsewhere. The town is empty, nothing in it but flabby mackarel, and wooden gooseberry tarts, and a hazy east wind. My sister is gone to Paris; I go to Strawberry-hill in three days for the summer, if summer there will ever be any.

If you want news, you must send to Ireland, where there is almost a civil war, between the lord lieutenant and primate on one side (observe, I don't tell you what *side* that is), and the speaker on the other, who carries questions by wholesale in the house of commons against the castle; and the *teterrima belli causa* is not the common one.

Reams of scandalous verses and ballads are come over, too bad to send you, if I had them, but I really have not. What is more provoking for the duke of Dorset, an address is come over directly to the king (not as usual through the channel of the lord lieutenant), to assure him of their great loyalty and apprehensions of being misrepresented. This is all I know, and you see, most imperfectly.

I was t'other night to see what is now grown the fashion, mother Midnight's oratory. It appeared the lowest buffoonery in the world even to me, who am used to my uncle Horace. There is a bad oration to ridicule, what it is too like, orator Henley; all the rest is perverted music; there is a man, who plays so nimbly on the kettle-drum,

that he has reduced that noisy instrument to an object of sight; for, if you don't see the tricks with his hands, it is no better than ordinary; another plays on a violin and trumpet together; another mimics a bagpipe with a German flute, and makes it full as disagreeable. There is an admired dulcimer, a favourite salt-box, and a really curious jew's-harp. Two or three men intend to persuade you that they play on a broomstick, which is drolly brought in, carefully shrouded in a case, so as to be mistaken for a bassoon or bass-viol; but they succeed in nothing but the action. The last fellow imitates * * * * curtseying to a French horn. There are twenty medley overtures, and a man who speaks a prologue and epilogue, in which he counterfeits all the actors and singers upon earth; in short, I have long been convinced, that what I used to imagine the most difficult thing in the world, mimicry, is the easiest; for one has seen for these two or three years, at Foote's and the other theatres, that when they lost one mimic, they called odd man, and another came and succeeded just as well.

Adieu! I have told you much more than I intended, and much more than I could conceive I had to say, except how does miss Montagu?

Yours ever.

P. S. Did you hear captain Hotham's *bon-mot* on sir Th. Robinson's making an assembly from

the top of his house to the bottom? He said, he wondered so many people would go to sir Thomas's, as he treated them all *de haut en bas*.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 6, 1752.

I HAVE just been in London for two or three days, to fetch an adventure, and am returned to my hill and my castle. I can't say I lost my labour, as you shall hear. Last Sunday night, being as wet a night as you shall see in a summer's day, about half an hour after twelve, I was just come home from White's, and undressing to step into bed, I heard Harry, who you know lies forwards, roar out, "Stop thief!" and run down stairs. I ran after him. Don't be frightened; I have not lost one enamel, nor bronze, nor have been shot through the head again. A gentlewoman, who lives at governor Pitt's, next door but one to me, and where Mr. Bentley used to live, was going to bed too, and heard people breaking into Mr. Freeman's house, who, like some acquaintance of mine in Albemarle-street, goes out of town, locks up his doors, and leaves the community to watch his furniture. N. B. It was broken open but two years ago, and I and all the chairmen vow they shall steal his house away another time, before we

will trouble our heads about it. Well, madam called out "watch;" two men, who were centinels, ran away, and Harry's voice after them. Down came I, and with a posse of chairmen and watchmen found the third fellow in the area of Mr. Freeman's house. Mayhap you have seen all this in the papers, little thinking who commanded the detachment. Harry fetched a blunderbuss to invite the thief up. One of the chairmen, who was drunk, cried, "*Give me the blunderbuss, I'll shoot him!*" But as the general's head was a little cooler, he prevented military execution, and took the prisoner without bloodshed, intending to make his triumphal entry into the metropolis of Twickenham with his captive tied to the wheels of his post-chaise. I find my style rises so much with the recollection of my victory, that I don't know how to descend to tell you that the enemy was a carpenter, and had a leather apron on. The next step was to share my glory with my friends. I dispatched a courier to White's for George Selwyn, who, you know, loves nothing upon earth so well as a criminal, except the execution of him. It happened very luckily, that the drawer, who received my message, has very lately been robbed himself, and had the wound fresh in his memory. He stalked up into the club-room, stopped short, and with a hollow trembling voice said, "*Mr. Selwyn! Mr. Walpole's compliments to you, and he has got a house-breaker*

for you!" A squadron immediately came to reinforce me, and having summoned Moreland with the keys of the fortress, we marched into the house to search for more of the gang. Col. Seabright, with his sword drawn went first, and then I, exactly the figure of Robinson Crusoe, with a candle and lanthorn in my hand, a carbine upon my shoulder, my hair wet and about my ears, and in a linen night-gown and slippers. We found the kitchen shutters forced, but not finished; and in the area a tremendous bag of tools, a hammer large enough for the hand of a Joel, and six chisels! All which *opima spolia*, as there was no temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in the neighbourhood, I was reduced to offer on the altar of sir Thomas Clarges.

I am now, as I told you, returned to my plough with as much humility and pride as any of my great predecessors. We lead quite a rural life, have had a sheep-shearing, a haymaking, a syllabub under the cow, and a fishing of three gold fish out of Poyang,[1] for a present to madam Clive. They breed with me excessively, and are grown to the size of small perch. Every thing grows, if tempests would let it, but I have had two of my largest trees broke to-day with the wind, and another last week. I am much obliged to you for

[1] Mr. Walpole called his gold-fish pond, Poyang.

the flower you offer me, but by the description, it is an Austrian rose, and I have several now in bloom. Mr. Bentley is with me, finishing the drawings for Gray's odes; there are some mandarin-cats fishing for gold fish, which will delight you; *au reste*, he is just where he was; he has heard something about a journey to Haughton, to the great Cu[2] of Haticuleo, but it don't seem fixed, unless he hears farther. Did he tell you the Prices and your aunt Cosby had dined here from Hampton-court? The mignionette beauty looks mighty well in his grandmother's jointure. The memoires of last year are quite finished, but I shall add some pages of notes, that will not want anecdotes. Discontents of the nature of those about Windsor-park, are spreading about Richmond. Lord Brooke, who has taken the late duchess of Rutland's at Petersham, asked for a key; the answer was, (mind it, for it was tolerably mortifying to an earl,) *that the princess had already refused one to my lord chancellor.*

By the way, you know that reverend head of the law is frequently shut up here with my lady M * * * * * h, who is as rich, and as tipsy, as Cacafogo in the comedy. What a jumble of avarice, lewdness, dignity, — and claret!

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[2] The earl of Halifax.

You will be pleased with a story of lord Bury,[a] that is come from Scotland: he is quartered at Inverness: the magistrates invited him to an entertainment with fire-works, which they intended to give on the morrow for the duke's birth-day. He thanked them, assured them he would represent their zeal to his royal highness; but he did not doubt but it would be more agreeable to him, if they postponed it to the day following, the anniversary of the battle of Culloden. They stared, said they could not promise on their own authority, but would go and consult their body. They returned, told him it was unprecedented, and could not be complied with. Lord Bury replied, he was sorry they had not given a negative at once, for he had mentioned it to his soldiers, who would not bear a disappointment, and was afraid it would provoke them to some outrage upon the town. This did;—they celebrated Culloden.

Adieu! my compliments to miss Montagu.

Yours ever.

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[a] Eldest son of William—Anne, earl of Albemarle.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Twickenham, Thursday.

DEAR GEORGE,

SINCE you give me leave to speak the truth, I must own it is not quite agreeable to me to undertake the commission you give me; nor do I say this to assume any merit in having obeyed you, but to prepare you against my solicitation miscarrying, for I cannot flatter myself with having so much interest with Mr. Fox as you think. However, I have wrote to him as pressingly as I could, and wish most heartily it may have any effect. Your brother I imagine will call upon him again; and Mr. Fox will naturally tell him whether he can do it or not at my request.

I should have been very glad of your company, if it had been convenient. You would have found me an absolute country gentleman: I am in the garden, planting as long as it is light, and shall not have finished, to be in London, before the middle of next week.

My compliments to your sisters and to the colonel, and what so poor a man as Hamlet is, may do to express his love and friending to him, God willing shall not lack. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 20, 1752.

You have threatened me with a messenger from the secretary's office to seize my papers; who would ever have taken you for a prophet? If goody Compton, your colleague, had taken upon her to foretell, there was enough of the witch and prophetess in her person and mysteriousness to have made a superstitious person believe she might be a cousin of Nostradamus, and heiress of some of her visions; but how came you by second sight? Which of the Cues matched in the highlands? In short, not to keep you in suspense, for I believe you are so far inspired as to be ignorant how your prophecy was to be accomplished, as we were sitting at dinner t'other day, word was brought that one of the king's messengers was at the door. Every drop of ink in my pen ran cold; Algernon Sidney danced before my eyes, and methought I heard my lord chief justice Lee, in a voice as dreadful as Jefferies, mumble out, *scribere est agere.* How comfortable it was to find, that Mr. Amyand, who was at table, had ordered this appanage of his dignity to attend him here for orders! However, I have buried the memoires under the oak in my garden, where they are to be found a thousand years hence, and taken perhaps for a Runic history in rhyme. I have part of

another valuable MS. to dispose, which I shall beg leave to commit to your care, and desire it may be concealed behind the wainscot in Mr. Bentley's Gothic house, whenever you build it. As the great person is living to whom it belonged, it would be highly dangerous to make it public; as soon as she is in disgrace, I don't know whether it will not be a good way of making court to her successor, to communicate it to the world, as I propose doing under the following title: "The Treasury of Art and Nature, or a collection of inestimable receipts, stolen out of the cabinet of madame de Pompadour, and now first published for the use of his fair country-women, by a true born Englishman and philomystic."

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So the pretty miss Bishop,[1] instead of being my niece, is to be Mrs. Bob Brudenel. What foolish birds are turtles, when they have scarce a hole to roost in! Adieu.

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[1] Daughter of sir Cecil Bishop.

To RICHARD BENTLEY,[1] Esq.

Battel, Wednesday, August 5, 1752.

HERE we are, my dear sir, in the middle of our pilgrimage; and lest we should never return from this holy land of abbeys and Gothic castles, I begin a letter to you, that I hope some charitable monk, when he has buried our bones, will deliver to you. We have had piteous distresses, but then we have seen glorious sights! You shall hear of each in their order.

Monday, Wind S. E.—at least that was our direction.—While they were changing our horses at Bromley, we went to see the bishop of Rochester's palace; not for the sake of any thing there was to be seen, but because there was a chimney, in which had stood a flower-pot, in which was put the counterfeit plot against bishop Sprat. 'Tis a paltry parsonage, with nothing of antiquity but two panes of glass, purloined from Islip's chapel in Westminster-abbey, with that abbot's rebus, an eye and a slip of a tree. In the garden there is a clear little pond, teeming with gold fish. The bishop is more prolific than I am.

From Sevenoak we went to Knowle. The park is sweet, with much old beech, and an immense

[1] Only son of doctor Bentley, the celebrated commentator.

sycamore before the great gate, that makes me more in love than ever with sycamores. The house is not near so extensive as I expected: the outward court has a beautiful decent simplicity that charms one. The apartments are many, but not large. The furniture throughout, ancient magnificence; loads of portraits, not good nor curious; ebony cabinets, embossed silver in vases, dishes, &c. embroidered beds, stiff chairs, and sweet bags lying on velvet tables, richly worked in silk and gold. There are two galleries, one very small; an old hall, and a spacious great drawing-room. There is never a good stair-case. The first little room you enter has sundry portraits of the times; but they seem to have been bespoke by the yard, and drawn all by the same painter: one should be happy if they were authentic; for among them there is Dudley duke of Northumberland, Gardiner of Winchester, the earl of Surry the poet, when a boy, and a Thomas duke of Norfolk; but I don't know which. The only fine picture is of lord Goring and Endymion Porter by Vandyke. There is a good head of the queen of Bohemia, a whole length of duc d'Espernon, and another good head of the Clifford countess of Dorset, who wrote that admirable haughty letter to secretary Williamson, when he recommended a person to her for member for Appleby: "*I have been bullied by an usurper, I have been neglected by a court, but I won't be dictated to by a subject:* —

your man shan't stand. Ann Dorset, Pembroke and Montgomery." In the chapel is a piece of ancient tapestry: saint Luke in his first profession is holding an urinal. Below stairs is a chamber of poets and players, which is proper enough in that house; for the first earl wrote a play, and the last earl was a poet, and I think married a player. Major Mohun and Betterton are curious among the latter, Cartwright and Flatman among the former. The arcade is newly enclosed, painted in fresco, and with modern glass of all the family matches. In the gallery is a whole length of the unfortunate earl of Surry, with his device a broken column, and the motto *Sat superest.* My father had one of them, but larger, and with more emblems, which the duke of Norfolk bought at my brother's sale. There is one good head of Henry VIII. and divers of Cranfield earl of Middlesex, the citizen who came to be lord treasurer, and was very near coming to be hanged. His countess, a bouncing kind of lady mayoress, looks pure awkward amongst so much good company. A visto cut through the wood has a delightful effect from the front; but there are some trumpery fragments of gardens that spoil the view from the state apartments.

We lay that night at Tunbridge town, and were surprised with the ruins of the old castle. The gateway is perfect, and the inclosure formed into a vineyard by a Mr. Hooker to whom it belongs,

and the walls spread with fruit, and the mount on which the keep stood, planted in the same way. The prospect is charming, and a breach in the wall opens below to a pretty Gothic bridge of three arches over the Medway. We honored the man for his taste—not but that we wished the committee at Strawberry-hill were to sit upon it, and stick cypresses among the hollows——But, alas! he sometimes makes eighteen sour hogsheads, and is going to disrobe *the ivy mantled tower*, because it harbours birds!

Now begins our chapter of woes. The inn was full of farmers and tobacco; and the next morning, when we were bound for Penshurst, the only man in the town who had two horses would not let us have them, because the roads, as he said, were so bad. We were forced to send to the Wells for others, which did not arrive till half the day was spent—we all the while up to the head and ears in a market of sheep and oxen. A mile from the town we climbed up a hill to see Summer-hill, the residence of Grammont's princess of Babylon. There is now scarce a road to it: the Paladins of those times were too valorous to fear breaking their necks; and I much apprehend that *la Monsery* and the fair mademoiselle Hamilton must have mounted their palfreys and rode behind their gentlemen-ushers upon pillions to the Wells. The house is little better than a farm, but has been an excellent one, and is entire, though out of repair.

I have drawn the front of it to show you, which you are to draw over again to show me. It stands high, commands a vast landscape beautifully wooded, and has quantities of large old trees to shelter itself, some of which might be well spared to open views.

From Summer-hill we went to Lamberhurst to dine; near which, that is, at the distance of three miles, up and down impracticable hills, in a most retired vale, such as Pope describes in the last Dunciad,

> Where slumber abbots, purple as their vines,

we found the ruins of Bayham abbey, which the Barrets and Hardings bid us visit. There are small but pretty remains, and a neat little Gothic house built near them by their nephew Pratt. They have found a tomb of an abbot, with a crosier, at length on the stone.

Here our woes increase. The roads grew bad beyond all badness, the night dark beyond all darkness, our guide frightened beyond all frightfulness. However, without being at all killed, we got up, or down, I forget which, it was so dark, a famous precipice called Silver-hill, and about ten at night arrived at a wretched village called Rotherbridge. We had still six miles hither, but determined to stop, as it would be a pity to break our necks before we had seen all we

intended. But, alas! there was only one bed to be had: all the rest were inhabited by smugglers, whom the people of the house called mountebanks; and with one of whom the lady of the den told Mr. Chute he might lie. We did not at all take to this society, but, armed with links and lanthorns, set out again upon this impracticable journey. At two o'clock in the morning we got hither to a still worse inn, and that crammed with excise officers, one of whom had just shot a smuggler. However, as we were neutral powers, we have passed safely through both armies hitherto, and can give you a little farther history of our wandering through these mountains, where the young gentlemen are forced to drive their curricles with a pair of oxen. The only morsel of good road we have found, was what even the natives had assured us was totally impracticable; these were eight miles to Hurst Monceaux. It is seated at the end of a large vale, five miles in a direct line to the sea, with wings of blue hills covered with wood, one of which falls down to the house in a sweep of 100 acres. The building for the convenience of water to the moat sees nothing at all; indeed it is entirely imagined on a plan of defence, with draw-bridges actually in being, round towers, watch-towers mounted on them, and battlements pierced for the passage of arrows from long bows. It was built in the time of Henry VI. and is as perfect as the first day. It does not seem to have

been ever quite finished, or at least that age was not arrived at the luxury of white-wash; for almost all the walls, except in the principal chambers, are in their native *brickhood*. It is a square building, each side about two hundred feet in length; a porch and cloister, very like Eton-college; and the whole is much in the same taste, the kitchen extremely so, with three vast funnels to the chimneys going up on the inside. There are two or three little courts for offices, but no magnificence of apartments. It is scarcely furnished with a few necessary beds and chairs: one side has been sashed, and a drawing-room and dining-room and two or three rooms wainscoted by the earl of Sussex, who married a natural daughter of Charles II. Their arms with delightful carvings by Gibbons, particularly two pheasants, hang over the chimneys. Over the great drawing-room chimney is the coat armour of the first Leonard lord Dacre, with all his alliances. Mr. Chute was transported, and called cousin with ten thousand quarterings. The chapel is small, and mean: the Virgin and seven long lean saints, ill done, remain in the windows. There have been four more, but seem to have been removed for light; and we actually found St. Catherine, and another gentlewoman with a church in her hand, exiled into the buttery. There remain two odd cavities, with very small wooden screens on each side the altar, which seem to have been

confessionals. The outside is a mixture of grey brick and stone, that has a very venerable appearance. The drawbridges are romantic to a degree; and there is a dungeon, that gives one a delightful idea of living in the days of soccage and under such goodly tenures. They showed us a dismal chamber which they called *Drummer's*-hall, and suppose that Mr. Addison's comedy is descended from it. In the windows of the gallery over the cloisters, which leads all round to the apartments, is the device of the Fienneses, a wolf holding a baton with a scroll, *Le roy le veut*—an unlucky motto, as I shall tell you presently, to the last peer of that line. The estate is two thousand a year, and so compact as to have but seventeen houses upon it. We walked up a brave old avenue to the church, with ships sailing on our left hand the whole way. Before the altar lies a lank brass knight, hight William Fienis, chevalier, who obiit c.c.c.c.v. that is in 1405. By the altar is a beautiful tomb, all in our trefoil taste, varied into a thousand little canopies and patterns, and two knights reposing on their backs. These were Thomas lord Dacre, and his only son Gregory, who died sans issue. An old grey-headed beadsman of the family talked to us of a blot in the scutcheon; and we had observed that the field of the arms was green instead of blue, and the lions ramping to the right, contrary to order. This an the man's imperfect narrative let us into the

circumstances of the personage before us; for there is no inscription. He went in a Chevy-chace style to hunt in *a Mr. Pelham's*[2] park at Lawton: the keepers opposed, a fray ensued, a man was killed. The haughty baron took the death upon himself, as most secure of pardon: but however, though there was no chancellor of the exchequer in the question, he was condemned to be hanged: *Le roy le vouloist.*

Now you are fully master of Hurst Monceaux, I shall carry you on to Battel——By the way, we bring you a thousand sketches, that you may show us what we have seen. Battel-abbey stands at the end of the town exactly as Warwick-castle does of Warwick; but the house of Webster have taken due care that it should not resemble it in any thing else. A vast building, which they call the old refectory, but which I believe was the original church, is now barn, coach-house, &c. The situation is noble, above the level of abbeys: what does remain of gateways and towers is beautiful, particularly the flat side of a cloister, which is now the front of the mansion-house. A miss of the family has clothed a fragment of a portico with cockle-shells! The grounds, and what has been a park, lie in a vile condition. In the church is the tomb of sir Antony Browne, master of the

[2] At the date of this letter Mr. Pelham was prime minister.

horse for life to Harry VIII. from whose descendants the estate was purchased. The head of John Hammond, the last abbot, is still perfect in one of the windows. Mr. Chute says, What charming things we should have done if Battel-abbey had been to be sold at Mrs. Chenevix's, as Strawberry was! Good-night!

Tunbridge, Friday.

We are returned hither, where we have established our head quarters. On our way, we had an opportunity of surveying that formidable mountain, Silver-hill, which we had floundered down in the dark: it commands a whole horizon of the richest blue prospect you ever saw. I take it to be the individual spot to which the duke of Newcastle carries the smugglers, and, showing them Sussex and Kent, says, "All this will I give you; if you will fall down and worship me." Indeed one of them, who exceeded the tempter's warrant, hangs in chains on the very spot where they finished the life of that wretched custom-house officer whom they were two days in murdering.

This morning we have been to Penshurst—but, oh! how fallen!—The park seems to have never answered its character: at present it is forlorn; and instead of Sacharissa's cypher carved on the beeches, I should sooner have expected to have found the milk-woman's score. Over the gate is an inscription, purporting the manor to have been

a boon from Edward VI. to sir William Sydney. The apartments are the grandest I have seen in any of these old palaces, but furnished in a tawdry modern taste. There are loads of portraits; but most of them seem christened by chance like children at a foundling-hospital. There is a portrait of Languet, the friend of sir Philip Sydney; and divers of himself and all his great kindred, particularly his sister-in-law with a vast lute, and Sacharissa, charmingly handsome. But there are really four very great curiosities, I believe as old portraits as any extant in England: they are, Fitzallen archbishop of Canterbury, Humphry Stafford the first duke of Buckingham, T. Wentworth, and John Foxle; all four with the dates of their commissions as constables of Queenborough-castle, from whence I suppose they were brought. The last is actually receiving his investiture from Edward the third, as Wentworth is in the dress of Richard the third's time. They are really not very ill done.[3] There are six more, only heads; and we have found since we came home, that Penshurst belonged for a time to that duke of Buckingham. There are some good tombs in the

[3] In Harris's History of Kent, he gives from Philpot a list of the constables of Queenborough castle, p. 376; the last but one of whom, sir Edward Hobby, is said to have collected all their portraits, of which number most probably were these ten.

church, and a very Vandal one, called *sir Stephen of Penchester*. When we had seen Penshurst, we borrowed saddles, and, bestriding the horses of our post-chaise, set out for Hever to visit a tomb of sir Thomas Bullen earl of Wiltshire, partly with a view to talk of it in Anna Bullen's walk at Strawberry-hill. But the measure of our woes was not full; we could not find our way, and were forced to return; and again lost ourselves in coming from Penshurst, having been directed to what they called a better road than the execrable one we had gone.

Since dinner we have been to lord Westmorland's at Mereworth, which is so perfect in a Palladian taste, that I must own it has recovered me a little from Gothic: It is better situated than I had expected from the bad reputation it bears, and has some prospect, though it is in a moat, and mightily besprinkled with small ponds. The design, you know, is taken from the Villa del Capra by Vicenza, but on a larger scale; yet, though it has cost an hundred thousand pounds, it is still only a fine villa: the finishing of in and outside has been exceedingly expensive. A wood that runs up a hill behind the house is broke like an Albano landscape with an octagon temple and a triumphal arch; but then there are some dismal clipt hedges, and a pyramid, which by a most unnatural copulation is at once a grotto and a greenhouse. Does it not put you in mind of the

proposal for your drawing a garden-seat, Chinese on one side and Gothic on the other? The chimneys, which are collected to a centre, spoil the dome of the house, and the hall is a dark well. The gallery is eighty-two feet long, hung with green velvet and pictures, among which is a fine Rembrandt, and a pretty La Hire. The ceilings are painted, and there is a fine bed of silk and gold tapestry. The attic is good, and the wings extremely pretty, with porticos formed on the style of the house. The earl has built a new church, with a steeple which seems designed for the latitude of Cheapside, and is so tall, that the poor church curtsies under it, like Mary Rich[4] in a vast high crown hat: it has a round portico like St. Clement's, with vast Doric pillars supporting a thin shelf. The inside is the most abominable piece of tawdriness that ever was seen, stuffed with pillars painted in imitation of verd antique, as all the sides are like Siena marble: but the greatest absurdity is a Doric frieze, between the triglyphs of which is the Jehovah, the I. H. S. and the dove. There is a little chapel with Nevil tombs, particularly of the first Fane earl of Westmorland, and of the founder of the old church, and the heart of a knight who was killed *in the*

[4] Daughter of sir Robert Rich, and elder sister of Elizabeth Rich lady Lyttleton.

wars. On the Fane tomb is a pedigree of brass in relief, and a genealogy of virtues to answer it. There is an entire window of painted-glass arms, chiefly modern, in the chapel, and another over the high altar. The hospitality of the house was truly Gothic; for they made our postillion drunk, and he overturned us close to a water, and the bank did but just save us from being in the middle of it. Pray, whenever you travel in Kentish roads, take care of keeping your driver sober.

Rochester, Sunday.

We have finished our progress sadly! Yesterday, after twenty mishaps, we got to Sissinghurst to dinner. There is a park in ruins, and a house in ten times greater ruins, built by sir John Baker, chancellor of the exchequer to queen Mary. You go through an arch of the stables to the house, the court of which is perfect and very beautiful. The duke of Bedford has a house at Cheneys in Buckinghamshire, which seems to have been very like it, but is more ruined. This has a good apartment, and a fine gallery a hundred and twenty feet by eighteen, which takes up one side: the wainscot is pretty and entire; the ceiling vaulted, and painted in a light genteel grotesque. The whole is built for show; for the back of the house is nothing but lath and plaster. From thence we went to Bocton-Malherbe, where are remains of a house of the Wottons, and their tombs in the

church: but the roads were so exceedingly bad, that it was dark before we got thither—and still darker before we got to Maidstone. From thence we passed this morning to Leeds castle. Never was such disappointment! There are small remains: the moat is the only handsome object, and is quite a lake, supplied by a cascade which tumbles through a bit of a romantic grove. The Fairfaxes have fitted up a pert bad apartment in the fore-part of the castle, and have left the only tolerable rooms for offices. They had a gleam of Gothic in their eyes; but it soon passed off into some modern windows, and some that never were ancient. The only thing that at all recompensed the fatigues we have undergone, was the picture of the duchess of Buckingham, *la Ragotte*, who is mentioned in Grammont——I say us; for I trust that Mr. Chute is as true a bigot to Grammont as I am. Adieu! I hope you will be as weary with reading our history, as we have been in travelling it.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Aug. 28, 1752.

WILL you never have done jigging at Northampton with that old harlotry major Compton? Peggy

Trevor told me, she had sent you a mandate to go thither. Shall I tell you how I found Peggy, that is, not Peggy, but her sister Muscovy? I went, found a bandage upon the knocker, an old woman and child in the hall, and a black boy at the door. Lord, thinks I, this can't be Mrs. Boscawen's; however Pompey let me up; above were fires blazing, and a good old gentlewoman, whose occupation easily spoke itself to be midwifery. "Dear Madam, I fancy I should not have come up." "Las-a-day sir, no, I believe not, but I'll step and ask." Immediately out came old Falmouth, looking like an ancient fairy, who has just been uttering a malediction over a newborn prince; and told me forsooth, that madame Muscovy was but just brought to bed, which Peggy Trevor soon came and confirmed. I told them, I would write you my adventure. I have not thanked you for your travels, and the violent curiosity you have given me to see Welbeck. Mr. Chute and I have been a progress too, but it was in a land you know full well, the county of Kent. I will only tell you that we broke our necks twenty times to your health, and had a distant glimpse of Hawkhurst from that Sierra Morena, Silverhill. I have since been with Mr. Conway at Park-place,[1] where I saw the individual, Mr. Cooper, a banker, and lord of the manor of Henley, who

[1] Mr. Conway's seat.

had those two extraordinary forfeitures from the executions of the Misses Blandy and Jefferies, two fields from the former, and a malt-house from the latter. I had scarce credited the story, and was pleased to hear it confirmed by the very person; though it was not quite so remarkable as it was reported, for both forfeitures were in the same manor.

Mr. Conway has brought lady Ailesbury from Minorca, but originally from Africa, a *Jeribo*: to be sure you know what that is; if you don't, I will tell you, and then I believe you will scarce know any better. It is a composition of a squirrel, a hare, a rat, and a monkey, which altogether looks very like a bird. In short, it is about the size of the first, with much such a head, except that the tip of the nose seems shaved off, and the remains are like a human hare-lip; the ears and its timidity are like a real hare. It has two short little feet before like a rat, but which it never uses for walking, I believe never but to hold its food. The tail is naked like a monkey's, with a tuft of hair at the end; striped black and white in rings. The two hind legs are as long as a G * * *'s, with feet more like a bird; than any other animal, and upon these it hops so immensely fast and upright, that at a distance you would take it for a large thrush. It lies in cotton, is brisk at night, eats wheat, and never drinks; it would, but drinking is fatal to them. Such is a jeribo!

Have you heard the particulars of the speaker's

quarrel with a young officer, who went to him, on his landlord refusing to give his servant the second best bed in the inn? He is a young man of eighteen hundred a year, and passionately fond of the army. The speaker produced the mutiny bill to him. "*Oh sir,*" *said the lad,* "*but there is another act of parliament which perhaps you don't know of.*" The *person of dignity,* as the newspapers call him, then was so ingenious as to harangue on the dangers of a standing army. The boy broke out, "don't tell me of your privileges, what would have become of you and your privileges in the year forty-five, if it had not been for the army—and pray, why do you fancy I would betray my country? I have as much to lose as you have!" In short, this abominable young Hector treated the speaker's *oracular decisions* with a familiarity, that quite shocks *me* to think of!

The Poemata-Grayo-Bentleiana, or Gray's odes, better illustrated than ever odes were by a Bentley, are in great forwardness, and I trust will appear this winter. I shall tell you one little anecdote about the authors, and conclude. Gray is in love to distraction with a figure of melancholy, which Mr. Bentley has drawn for one of the odes, and told him he must have something of his pencil: Mr. Bentley desired him to choose a subject. He chose *Theodore and Honoria!*—don't mention this, for we are shocked. It is

loving melancholy till it is not strong enough, and he grows to dram with Horror. Good night; my compliments to Miss Montagu: did you receive my recipes?

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

White's, December 14, 1752.

I SHALL be much obliged to you for the passion flower, notwithstanding it comes out of a garden of Eden, from which Eve, my sister-in-law, long ago gathered passion-fruit. I thank you too for the offer of your Roman correspondences, but you know I have done with virtu, and deal only with the Goths and Vandals.

You ask a very improper person, why my lord[1] Harcourt resigned. My lord Coventry says it is the present great arcanum of government, and you know I am quite out of the circle of secrets. The town says, that it was finding Stone is a Jacobite; and it says too, that the whigs are very uneasy. My lord Egremont says the whigs can't

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[1] On the death of the prince of Wales in 1751, his eldest son, prince George, was committed to the care of the earl of Harcourt as governor.

be in danger, for then my lord Hartington would not be gone a hunting. Every body is as impatient as you can be, to know the real cause, but I don't find that either lord or bishop[2] are disposed to let the world into the true secret. It is pretty certain that one Mr. Cresset has abused both of them without ceremony, and that the solicitor-general[3] told the bishop in plain terms that my lord Harcourt was a cypher, and was put in to be a cypher: an employment that, considering it is a sinecure, seems to hang unusually long upon their hands. They have so lately quarrelled with poor lord Holderness for playing at blindman's buff at Tunbridge, that it will be difficult to give him another place only because he is fit to play at blindman's buff; and yet it is much believed that he will be the governor, and your cousin his successor. I am as improper to tell you why the governor of Nova Scotia is to be at the head of the Independents. I have long thought him one of the greatest dependents, and I assure you I have seen nothing since his return to make me change my opinion. He is too busy in the bedchamber to remember me.

Mr. F * * * said nothing about your brother;

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[2] The bishop of Norwich, who was preceptor to prince George.

[3] Mr. Murray, afterwards earl of Mansfield, and lord chief justice of England.

if the offer was ill-designed from one quarter, I think you may make the refusal of it have its weight in another.

It would be odd to conclude a letter from White's without a *bon mot* of George Selwyn's; he came in here t'other night, and saw James Jeffries playing at piquet with sir Everard Falkener, "Oh!" says he, "now he is robbing the mail." Good night, when do you come back?

Yours ever.

To Mr. GRAY.

Arlington-street, Feb. 20, 1753.

I am very sorry that the haste I made to deliver you from your uneasiness the first moment after I received your letter, should have made me express myself in a manner to have the quite contrary effect from what I intended. You well know how rapidly and carelessly I always write my letters: the note you mention was written in a still greater hurry than ordinary, and merely to put you out of pain. I had not seen Dodsley, consequently could only tell you that I did not doubt but he would have no objection to satisfy you, as you was willing to prevent his being a loser by the

plate.[1] Now, from this declaration, how is it possible for you to have for one moment put such a construction upon my words, as would have been a downright stupid brutality, unprovoked? It is impossible for me to recollect my very expression, but I am confident that I have repeated the whole substance.

How the bookseller would be less a loser by being at more expence, I can easily explain to you. He feared the price of half-a-guinea would seem too high to most purchasers. If by the expence of ten guineas more he could make the book appear so much more rich and showy as to induce people to think it cheap, the profits from selling many more copies would amply recompense him for his additional disbursement.

The thought of having the head engraved was entirely Dodsley's own, and against my opinion, as I concluded it would be against yours; which made me determine to acquaint you with it before its appearance.

When you reflect on what I have said now, you will see very clearly, that I had and could have no other possible meaning in what I wrote last. You

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[1] This was a print of Mr. Gray, after the portrait of him by Eckardt. It was intended to have been prefixed to Dodsley's 4to. edition of his Odes, with Mr. Bentley's designs; but Mr. Gray's extreme repugnance to the proposal obliged his friends to drop it.

might justly have accused me of neglect, if I had deferred giving you all the satisfaction in my power, as soon as ever I knew your uneasiness.

The head I give up. The title I think will be wrong, and not answer your purpose; for, as the drawings are evidently calculated for the poems, why will the improper disposition of the word *designs* before *poems* make the edition less yours? I am as little convinced that there is any affectation in leaving out the *Mr.* before your names: it is a barbarous addition: the other is simple and classic; a rank I cannot help thinking due to both the poet and painter. Without ranging myself among classics, I assure you, were I to print any thing with my name, it should be plain Horace Walpole: *Mr.* is one of the Gothicisms I abominate. The explanation[2] was certainly added for people who have not eyes:—such are almost all who have seen Mr. Bentley's drawings, and think to compliment him by mistaking them for prints. Alas! the generality want as much to have the words a man, a cock, written under his drawings, as under the most execrable hieroglyphics of Egypt, or of sign-post painters.

I will say no more now, but that you must not wonder if I am partial to you and yours, when you can write as you do and yet feel so little vanity.

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[2] Of Mr. Bentley's designs.

I have used freedom enough with your writings to convince you I speak truth; I praise and scold Mr. Bentley immoderately, as I think he draws well or ill: I never think it worth my while to do either, especially to blame, where there are not generally vast excellencies. Good night! Don't suspect me when I have no fault but impatience to make you easy.

Yours ever.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, May 6, 1753.

THOUGH my letter bears a country date, I am only a passenger here, just come to overlook my workmen, and repose myself upon some shavings, after the fatigues of the season. You know balls and masquerades always abound as the weather begins to be too hot for them, and this has been quite a spring-tide of diversion. Not that I am so abandoned as to have partaken of all; I neither made the Newmarket campaign under the duke,[1] nor danced at any ball,—nor *looked well* at any masquerade: I begin to submit to my years, and amuse myself—only just as much as I like. In-

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[1] The duke of Cumberland.

deed, when parties and politics are at an end, an Englishman may be allowed not to be always grave and out of humour. His royal highness has won as many hearts at Newmarket as he lost in Scotland; he played deep, and handsomely; received every body at his table with the greatest good humour, and permitted the familiarities of the place with ease and sense.

There have been balls at the duchess of Norfolk's, at Holland-house, and lord Granville's, and a subscription masquerade: the dresses were not very fine, not much invention, nor any very absurd. I find I am telling you extreme trifles; but you desired me to write, and there literally happens nothing of greater moment. If I can fill out a sheet even in this way, I will; for at Sligo[2] perhaps I may appear a journalist of consequence.

There is a madame de Mezieres arrived from Paris, who has said a thousand impertinent things to my lady Albemarle, on my lord's not letting her come to Paris.[3] I should not repeat this to you, only to introduce George Selwyn's account of this woman, who, he says, is mother to the princess of Montauban, grandmother to

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[2] Mr. Conway was then with his regiment quartered at Sligo in Ireland.

[3] Lord Albemarle was then ambassador at Paris.

madame de Brionne, sister to general Oglethorpe, and was laundress to the duchess of Portsmouth.

Sir Charles Williams, never very happy at panegyric, has made a distich on the queen of Hungary, which I send you for the curiosity, not the merit of it:

O regina orbis prima et pulcherrima, ridens
Es Venus, incedens Juno, Minerva loquens.

It is infinitely admired at Vienna, but baron Munchausen has received a translation of it into German in six verses, which are still more applauded.

There is another volume published of lord Bolinbroke's; it contains his famous letter to sir William Windham, with an admirable description of the pretender and his court, and a very poor justification of his own treachery to that party; a flimsy unfinished state of the nation, written at the end of his life, and the common-place tautology of an old politician, who lives out of the world and writes from newspapers; and a superficial letter to Mr. Pope, as an introduction to his Essays, which are printed, but not yet published.

What shall I say to you more? You see how I am forced to tack paragraphs together, without any connection or consequence! Shall I tell you one more idle story, and will you just recollect

that you once concerned yourself enough about the heroine of it, to excuse my repeating such a piece of tittle-tattle? This heroine is lady * * *, the hero is * * not entirely of royal blood; at least I have never heard that Lodomie the toothdrawer was in any manner descended from the house of Bourbon. Don't be alarmed: this plebeian operator is not in the catalogue of your successors. How the lady was the aggressor is not known; 'tis only conjectured that French politeness and French interestedness could never have gone such lengths without mighty provocation. The first instance of the tooth-drawer's ungentle behaviour was on hearing it said that lady * * * was to have her four girls drawn by Liotard; which was wondered at, as his price is so great—"Oh!" said Lodomie, "*chacune paie pour la sienne.*" Soon after this insult, there was some dispute about payments and tooth-powder, and divers messages passed. At last the lady wrote a card, to say she did not understand such impertinent answers being given to her chairman by an *arracheur de dents.* The angry little gentleman, with as much intrepidity as if he had drawn out all her teeth, tore the card in five slits, and returned it with this astonishing sentence, "I return you, your impertinent card, and desire you will pay me what you owe me." All I know more is, that the tooth-drawer still lives; and so do many lords

and gentlemen, formerly thought the slaves of the offended fair one's will and passions, and among others, to his great shame,

Your sincere friend.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, May 22, 1753.

You may very possibly be set out for Greatworth, but what house Greatworth is, or whose, or how you came to have it, is all a profound secret to us: your transitions are so Pindaric, that without notes, we do not understand them, especially as neither Mr. Bentley nor I have seen any of the letters, which I suppose you have written to your family, in the intervals of your journeyings from sir Jonathan Cope's to Roel, and from Roel to Greatworth. Mr. Bentley was just ready to send you down a packet of Gothic, and brick and mortar, and arched windows, and taper columns to be erected at Roel——no such matter, you have met with some brave chambers belonging to sir Jonathan somebody in Northamptonshire, and are unloading your camels and caravans, and pitching your tents among your own tribe. I cannot be quite sorry, for I shall certainly visit you at Greatworth, and it might have been some years before the curtain had drawn up at Roel.

We emerge very fast out of shavings, and hammerings, and pastings; the painted glass is full blown in every window, and the gorgeous saints, that were brought out for one day on the festival of Saint George Montagu, are fixed for ever in the tabernacles they are to inhabit. The castle is not the only beauty: the garden is at the height of all its sweets; and to-day we had a glimpse of the sun, as he passed by, though I am convinced the summer is over; for these two last years we have been forced to compound for five hot days in the pound.

News, there is none to tell you. We have had two days in the house of commons, that had something of the air of parliament; there has been a marriage-bill, invented by my lord Bath, and cooked up by the chancellor,[1] which was warmly opposed by the duke of Bedford in the lords, and with us by Fox[2] and Nugent:[3] the latter made an admirable speech last week against it, and Charles Townshend[4] another very good one yesterday, when we sat till near ten o'clock, but were beat, we minority, by 165 to 84.

I know nothing else but elopements: I have lost my man Henry, who is run away for debt,

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1 The earl of Hardwicke.

2 Henry Fox, afterwards created lord Holland.

3 Robert Nugent, afterwards created earl Nugent.

4 Second son of the marquis of Townshend.

and my lord Bath his only son, who is run away from thirty thousand pounds a year, which in all probability would have come to him in six months. There had been some great fracas about his marriage; the stories are various on the *Why;* some say his father told miss Nichols that his son was a very worthless young man; others, that the earl could not bring himself to make tolerable settlements; and a third party say, that the countess has blown up a quarrel in order to have his son in her power, and at her mercy. Whatever the cause was, this ingenious young man, who you know has made my lady Townshend his everlasting enemy, by repeating her histories of miss Chudleigh to that *miss,* of all counsellors in the world, picked out my lady Townshend to consult on his domestic grievances: she, with all the goodnature and charity imaginable, immediately advised him to be disinherited. He took her advice, left two dutiful letters for his parents, to notify his disobedience, and went off last Friday night to France. The earl is so angry, that he could almost bring himself to give Mr. Newport, and twenty other people, their estates again. Good night—here is the Goth, Mr. Bentley, wants to say a word to you.

Yours ever.

HOR. WALPOLE.

DEAR SIR,

I WROTE you a supernumerary letter on Saturday,

but as I find you have shifted your quarters, since I heard from you, imagine it may not have reached you yet. If you want to know what made me so assiduous, it was to tell you sir Danvers Osborn has kissed hands for New York, that's all.

I am

Sincerely yours,

B. BENTLEY.

P. S. I wish you would write a line to him mentioning me, that's more.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, May 24, 1753.

IT is well you are married! How would my lady Ailesbury have liked to be asked in a parish church for three Sundays running? I really believe she would have worn her weeds for ever, rather than have passed through so impudent a ceremony! What do *you* think?—But you will want to know the interpretation of this preamble. Why, there is a new bill, which, under the notion of preventing clandestine marriages, has made such a general rummage and reform in the office of matrimony, that every Strephon and Chloe, every dowager and her H***, will have as many impediments and formalities to undergo as

a treaty of peace. Lord Bath invented this bill, but had drawn it so ill, that the chancellor was forced to draw a new one—and then grew so fond of his own creature, that he has crammed it down the throats of both houses—though they gave many a gulp before they could swallow it. The duke of Bedford attacked it first with great spirit and mastery, but had little support, though the duke of Newcastle did not vote. The lawyers were all ordered to nurse it through our house; but, except the poor attorney general,[1] who is nurse indeed to all intents and purposes, and did amply gossip over it, not one of them said a word. Nugent shone extremely in opposition to the bill, and, though every now and then on the precipice of absurdity, kept clear of it, with great humour and wit and argument, and was unanswered—yet we were beat. Last Monday it came into the committee: Charles Townshend acted a very good speech with great cleverness, and drew a picture of his own story and his father's tyranny, with at least as much parts as modesty. Mr. Fox mumbled the chancellor and his lawyers, and pinned the plan of the bill upon a pamphlet he had found of Dr. Gally's, where the doctor, recommending the French scheme of matrimony, says, *It was found that fathers were too apt to for-*

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1 Sir Dudley Ryder

give. The gospel, I thought, said Mr. Fox, enjoined forgiveness; but pious Dr. Gally thinks fathers are too apt to forgive. Mr. Pelham, extremely in his opinion against the bill, and in his inclination too, was forced to rivet it, and, without speaking one word for it, taught the house how to vote for it; and it was carried against the chairman's leaving the chair by 165 to 84.

This is all the news I know, or at least was all when I came out of town; for I left the tinkering of the bill, and came hither last Tuesday to my workmen. I flatter myself I shall get into tolerable order to receive my lady Ailesbury and you at your return from Sligo, from whence I have received your letter, and where I hope you have had my first. I say nothing of the exile of the parliament of Paris, for I know no more than you will see in the public papers; only, as we are going to choose a new parliament, we could not do better than choose the exiles: we could scarce choose braver or honester men. I say as little of mademoiselle Murphy,[2] for I conclude you hear nothing but her health drank in whisky. Don't all the naked Irish flatter themselves with preferment, and claim relation with her? Miss Chudleigh says there is some sense in belonging to

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[2] An Irish woman who was for a short time mistress to Louis XV.

a king who turns off an old mistress when he has got a new one.

Arlington-street, May 29.

I AM come to town for a day or two, and find that the marriage bill has not only lasted till now in the committee, but has produced, or at least disclosed, extreme heats. Mr. Fox and Mr. Pelham have had very high words on every clause, and the former has renewed his attacks on the chancellor under the name of Dr. Gally. Yesterday on the nullity clause they sat till half an hour after three in the morning, having just then had a division on adjournment, which was rejected by the ministry by above 80 to 70. The speaker,[3] who had spoken well against the clause, was so misrepresented by the attorney general, that there was danger of a skimmington between the great wig and the coif, the former having given a flat lie to the latter. Mr. Fox, I am told, outdid himself for spirit, and severity on the chancellor and the lawyers. I say I am told; for I was content with having been beat twice, and did not attend. The heats between the two ministers were far from cooling by the length of the debate. Adieu! You did little expect in these times, and at this season, to have heard such a parliamentary his-

[3] Arthur Onslow.

tory! The bill is not near finished; Mr. Fox has declared he will dispute every inch of ground. I hope he won't be banished to Pontoise.[4] I shall write to you no more, so pray return. I hear most favourable accounts of my lady Ailesbury.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 11, 1753.

You will think me very fickle, and that I have but a slight regard to the castle I am building, of my ancestors, when you hear that I have been these last eight days in London amid dust and stinks, instead of seringa, roses, battlements and niches; but you, perhaps, recollect that I have another Gothic passion, which is for squabbles in the Wittenagemot.[5] I can't say that the contests have run so high in either house, as they have

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[4] The parliament of Paris having espoused the cause of religious liberty, and apprehended several priests who by the authority of the archbishop of Paris and other prelates had refused the sacraments to those who would not subscribe to the bull Unigenitus, were banished by the king, Louis XV. to Pontoise.

[5] The name of the Saxon great council, the supposed origin of parliaments.

sometimes done in former days; but this age has found out a new method of parliamentary altercations. The commons abuse the barons, and the barons return it; in short, Mr. Fox attacked the chancellor violently on the marriage-bill, and when it was sent back to the lords, the chancellor made the most outrageous invective on Fox that ever was heard. But what offends still more, I don't mean offends Fox more, was the chancellor describing the chief persons, who had opposed his bill in the commons, and giving reason why he *excused* them. As the speaker was in the number of the *excused*, the two maces are ready to come to blows. The town says that Mr. Fox is to be dismissed, but I can scarce think it will go so far.

My lord Cornwallis is made an earl; lord Bristol's sisters have the rank of earl's daughters, Damer is lord Milton in Ireland, and the new lord Barnard is, I hear, to be earl of Darlington.

Poor lady Caroline Brand is dead of a rheumatic fever, and her husband as miserable a man as ever he was a cheerful one: I grieve much for her, and pity him; they were infinitely happy, and lived in the most perfect friendship I ever saw.

You may be assured that I will pay you a visit sometime this summer, though not yet, as I cannot leave my workmen, especially as we have a painter, who paints the paper on the staircase under Mr. Bentley's direction. The armoury

bespeaks the ancient chivalry of the lords of the castle; and I have filled Mr. Bentley's Gothic lanthorn with painted glass, which casts the most venerable gloom on the stairs that ever was seen since the days of Abelard. The lanthorn itself, in which I have stuck a coat of the Veres, is supposed to have come from Castle Henningham. Lord and lady Veres were here t'other day, and called cousins with it, and would very readily have invited it to Hanworth, but her *Portuguese* blood has so *blackened* the true stream, that I could not bring myself to offer so fair a gift to their chapel.

I shall only tell you a bon-mot of Keith's, the marriage-broker, and conclude. "G—d d—n the bishops," said he, (I beg miss Montagu's pardon) "so they will hinder my marrying. Well, let 'em, but I'll be revenged: I'll buy two or three acres of ground, and by G—d, I'll underbury them all." Adieu.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 17, 1753.

DEAR SIR,

You are so kind, that I am peevish with myself for not being able to fix a positive day for being

with you; as near as I can guess it will be some of the very first days of the next month: I am engaged to go with lady Ailesbury and Mr. Conway to Stowe, the 28th of this month, if some little business, which I have here, does not prevent me; and from thence I propose to meet Mr. Chute at Greatworth. If this should at all interfere with your schemes, tell me so; especially, I must beg that you would not so far depend on me, as to stay one minute from doing any thing else you like, because it is quite impossible for me to be sure that I can execute just at the time I propose such agreeable projects. Meeting Mrs. Trevor will be a principal part of my pleasure; but the summer shall certainly not pass, without my seeing you.

You will I am sure be concerned to hear that your favourite, miss Brown, the pretty catholic, who lived with madame D'Acunha, is dead at Paris, by the ignorance of the physician. Tom Harvey, who always obliges the town with a quarrel in a dead season, has published a delightful letter to sir William Bunbury, full of madness and wit. He had given the Dr. a precedent for a clergyman's fighting a duel, and I furnished him with another story of the same kind, that diverted him extremely. A Dr. Suckling, who married a niece of my father, quarrelled with a country squire, who said, "*Doctor, your gown is your protection.*" "*Is it so?*" replied the par-

son, "*but by God it shall not be yours,*" pulled it off, and thrashed him—I was going to say *damnably*, at least, *divinely*. Do but think, my lord Coke and Tom Harvey are both bound to the peace, and are always going to fight together; how comfortable for their sureties!

My lord Pomfret is dead; George Selwyn says, *that my lord Ashburnham is not more glad to get into the parks*, than lord Falkland *is to get out of them*. You know he was forced to live in a privileged place.

Jack Hill is dead too, and has dropped about a hundred legacies; a thousand pound to the dowager of Rockingham; as much with all his plate and china to her sister Bel. I don't find that my uncle has got so much as a case of knives and forks: he always paid great court, but Mary Magdalen, my aunt, undid all by scolding the man, and her spouse durst not take his part.

Lady Anne Paulett's daughter is eloped with a country clergyman. The duchess of Argyle harangues against the marriage-bill not taking place immediately, and is persuaded that all the girls will go off before next Lady-day.

Before I finish, I must describe to you the manner, in which I overtook monsieur le duc de Mirepoix t'other day, who lives at lord Dunkeron's house at Turnham-green. It was seven o'clock in the evening of one of the hottest and most dusty days of this summer. He was walking

slowly in the *beau milieu* of Brentford town, without any company, but with a brown lap-dog with long ears, two pointers, two pages, three footmen, and a vis-a-vis following him. By the best accounts I can get, he must have been to survey the ground of the battle of Brentford, which I hear he has much studied, and harangues upon.

Adieu! I enclose a World[1] to you, which, by a story I shall tell you, I find is called mine. I met Mrs. Clive two nights ago, and told her I had been in the meadows, but would walk no more there, for there was all the world. "*Well,*" says she, "*and don't you like the World? I hear it was very clever last Thursday.*"—All I know is, that you will meet some of your acquaintance there. Good night, with my compliments to miss Montagu.

Yours ever.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.[2]

Stowe, Aug. 4, 1753.

My dear Sir,

You would deserve to be scolded, if you had not lost almost as much pleasure as you have disap-

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1 A periodical paper.

2 Of the Vine, in Hampshire.

pointed me of.[3] Whether George Montagu will be so content with your commuting punishments, I don't know: I should think not: he *cried and roared all night*[4] when I delivered your excuse. He is extremely well-housed, after having roamed like a Tartar about the country with his whole personal estate at his heels. There is an extensive view, which is called pretty: but Northamptonshire is no county to please me. What entertained me was, that he who in London was grown an absolute recluse, is over head and ears in neighbours, and as popular as if he intended to stand for the county, instead of having given up the town. The very first morning after my arrival, as we were getting into the chaise to go to Wroxton, they notified a sir Harry Danvers, a young squire, booted and spurred, and buckskin-breeched. "Will you drink any chocolate?"—"No; a little wine and water, if you please."—I suspected nothing but that he had rode till he was dry. "Nicolò, get some wine and water." He desired the water might be warm—I began to stare—Montagu understood the dialect, and ordered a negus.——I had great difficulty to keep my countenance, and still more when I saw the baronet finish a very large jug indeed. To be

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[3] In not accompanying Mr. Walpole on a visit to Mr. George Montagu at Greatworth.

[4] A phrase of Mr. Montagu's.

sure, he wondered as much at me who did not finish a jug; and I could not help reflecting, that living always in the world makes one as unfit for living out of it, as always living out of it does for living in it. Knightley, the knight of the shire, has been entertaining all the parishes round with a turtle-feast, which, so far from succeeding, has almost made him suspected for a *Jew*, as the country parsons have not yet learned to wade into green fat.

The roads are very bad to Greatworth, and such numbers of gates, that if one loved punning one should call it the *Gate-house*. The proprietor had a wonderful invention: the chimneys, which are of stone, have niches and benches in them, where the man used to sit and smoke. I had twenty disasters, according to custom; lost my way, and had my French boy almost killed by a fall with his horse: but I have been much pleased. When I was at Park-place I went to see sir H. Englefield's,[5] which Mr. C**** and lady M*** prefer, but I think very undeservedly, to Mr. Southcote's. It is not above a quarter as extensive, and wants the river. There is a pretty view of Reading seen under a rude arch, and the water is well disposed. The buildings are very insignificant, and the house far from good. The town

[5] Whiteknights.

of Henley has been extremely disturbed with an engagement between the ghosts of miss Blandy and her father, which continued so violent, that some bold persons, to prevent farther bloodshed, broke in, and found it was two jackasses which had got into the kitchen.

I felt strangely tempted to stay at Oxford and survey it at my leisure; but, as I was alone, I had not courage. I passed by sir James Dashwood's,[6] a vast new house, situated so high that it seems to stand for the county as well as himself. I did look over lord Jersey's,[7] which was built for a hunting-box, and is still little better. But now I am going to tell you how delightful a day I passed at Wroxton. Lord Guildford has made George Montagu so absolutely viceroy over it, that we saw it more agreeable than you can conceive; roamed over the whole house, found every door open, saw not a creature, had an extreme good dinner, wine, fruit, coffee and tea in the library, were served by fairies, tumbled over the books, said one or two talismanic words, and the cascade played, and went home loaded with pine-apples and flowers.—You will take me for monsieur de Coulanges, I describe eatables so feelingly; but the manner in which we were served made the whole delicious. The house was

[6] At High Wycombe.

[7] Middleton.

built by a lord Downe in the reign of James the first; and though there is a fine hall and a vast dining-room below, and as large a drawing-room above, it is neither good nor agreeable; one end of the front was never finished, and might have a good apartment. The library is added by this lord, and is a pleasant chamber. Except loads of old portraits, there is no tolerable furniture. A whole length of the first earl of Downe is in the bath-robes, and has a coif under the hat and feather. There is a charming picture of prince Henry about twelve years old, drawing his sword to kill a stag, with a lord Harrington; a good portrait of sir Owen Hopton, 1590; your *pious* grandmother my lady Dacre, which I think like you; some good Cornelius Johnsons; a lord North by Riley, good; and an extreme fine portrait by him of the lord keeper: I have never seen but few of the hand, but most of them have been equal to Lely and the best of sir Godfrey. There is too a curious portait of sir Thomas Pope, the founder of Trinity-college, Oxford, said to be by Holbein. The chapel is new, but in a pretty Gothic taste, with a very long window of painted glass, very tolerable. The frieze is pendent, just in the manner I propose for the eating-room at Strawberry-hill. Except one scene, which is indeed noble, I cannot much commend the without-doors. This scene consists of a beautiful lake entirely shut in with wood: the head falls into a

fine cascade, and that into a serpentine river, over which is a little Gothic seat like a round temple, lifted up by a shaggy mount. On an eminence in the park is an obelisk erected to the honour and at the expence of "*optimus and munificentissimus*" the late prince of Wales, "*in loci amœnitatem et memoriam adventûs ejus.*" There are several paltry Chinese buildings and bridges, which have the merit or demerit of being the progenitors of a very numerous race all over the kingdom: at least they were of the very first. In the church is a beautiful tomb of an earl and countess of Downe, and the tower is in a good plain Gothic style, and was once, they tell you, still more beautiful; but Mr. Miller, who designed it, unluckily once in his life happened to think rather of beauty than of the water-tables, and so it fell down the first winter.

On Wednesday morning we went to see a sweet little chapel at Steane, built in 1620 by sir T. Crewe, speaker in the time of the first James and Charles. Here are remains of the mansion-house, but quite in ruins: the chapel is kept up by my lady Arran, the last of the race. There are seven or eight monuments. On one is this epitaph, which I thought pretty enough:

> Conjux casta, parens felix, matrona pudica,
> Sara viro, mundo Martha, Maria Deo.

On another is the most affected inscription I ever

saw, written by two brothers on their sister; they say, *This agreeable mortal translated her into immortality such a day*: but I could not help laughing at one quaint expression, to which time has given a droll sense: *She was a constant lover of the best.*

I have been here these two days, extremely amused and charmed indeed. Wherever you stand you see an Albano landscape. Half as many buildings I believe would be too many, but such a profusion gives inexpressible richness. You may imagine I have some private reflections entertaining enough, not very communicable to the company: The temple of Friendship, in which, among twenty memorandums of quarrels, is the bust of Mr. Pitt: Mr. James Grenville is now in the house, whom his uncle disinherited for his attachment to that very Pylades Mr. Pitt. He broke with Mr. Pope, who is deified in the Elysian fields, before the inscription for his head was finished. That of sir J. Barnard, which was bespoke by the name of a bust of my lord mayor, was by a mistake of the sculptor done for alderman Perry. The statue of the king, and that "*honori, laudi, virtuti divæ Carolinæ,*" make one smile, when one sees the ceiling where Britannia rejects and hides the reign of king* * * * But I have no patience at building and planting a satire! Such is the temple of modern virtue in ruins! The Grecian temple is glorious: this I openly

worship: in the heretical corner of my heart I adore the Gothic building, which by some unusual inspiration Gibbs has made pure and beautiful and venerable. The style has a propensity to the Venetian or mosque gothic, and the great column near it makes the whole put one in mind of the place of St. Mark. The windows are throughout consecrated with painted glass; most of it from the priory at Warwick, a present from that foolish * * * *, who quarrelled with me (because his father was a gardener) for asking him if lord Brook had planted much. —— A-propos to painted glass. I forgot to tell you of a sweet house which Mr. Montagu carried me to see, belonging to a Mr. Holman, a catholic, and called Warkworth. The situation is pretty, the front charming, composed of two round and two square towers. The court within is incomplete on one side; but above stairs is a vast gallery with four bow-windows and twelve other large ones, all filled with the arms of the old peers of England, with all their quarterings entire. You don't deserve, after deserting me, that I should tempt you to such a sight; but this alone is worth while to carry you to Greatworth.

Adieu, my dear sir! I return to Strawberry tomorrow, and forgive you enough not to deprive myself of the satisfaction of seeing you there whenever you have nothing else to do.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Aug. 16, 1753.

Don't you suspect that I have not only forgot the pleasure I had at Greatworth and Wroxton,[1] but the commissions you gave me too? It looks a little ungrateful not to have vented a word of thanks; but I staid to write till I could send you the things, and when I had them, I staid to send them by Mr. Chute, who tells you by to-night's post when he will bring them. The butter-plate is not exactly what you ordered, but I flatter myself you will like it as well. There are a few seeds; more shall follow at the end of the autumn. Besides Tom Harvey's letter, I have sent you maps of Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire, having felt the want of them, when I was with you. I found the road to Stowe above twelve miles, very bad, and it took me up two hours and a half: but the formidable idea I conceived of the breakfast and way of life there by no means answered. You was a prophet; it was very agreeable. I am ashamed to tell you that I laughed half an hour yesterday at the sudden death of your new friend sir Harry Danvers, *after a morning's airing*, the

[1] The seat of lord Guildford.

news call it; I suspect it was after a negus. I found my garden brown and bare, but these rains have recovered the greenth. You may get your pond ready as soon as you please; the gold fish swarm: Mr. Bentley carried a dozen to town t'other day in a decanter. You would be entertained with our fishing; instead of nets and rods and lines and worms, we use nothing but a pail and a basin and a tea-strainer, which I persuade my neighbours is the Chinese method. Adieu! my best compliments to miss Montagu.

Yours ever.

P. S. Since writing my letter, I have received your twin dispatches. I am extremely sensible of the honour my lord Guildford does me, and beg you to transmit my gratitude to him: if he is ever at Wroxton when I visit Greatworth, I shall certainly wait upon him, and think myself happy in seeing that charming place again. As soon as I go to town, I shall send for Moreland and harbour your wardrobe with great pleasure. I find I must beg your pardon for laughing in the former part of my letter about your baronet's death; but his *wine and water a little warm* had left such a ridiculous effect upon me, that even his death could not efface it. Good night.

Mr. Miller told me at Stowe, that the chimney-piece (I think from Steane) was he believed at

Banbury, but he did not know exactly. If it lies in your way to inquire, on so vague a direction, will you? Mr. Chute may bring me a sketch of it.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, September, 1753.

My dear Sir,

I am going to send you another volume of my travels; I don't know whether I shall not, at last, write a new *Camden's Britannia;* but lest you should be afraid of my itinerary, I will at least promise you that it shall not be quite so dry as most surveys, which contain nothing but lists of impropriations and glebes, and carucates, and transcripts out of Domesday, and tell one nothing that is entertaining, describe no houses nor parks, mention no curious pictures, but are fully satisfied if they inform you, that they believe that some nameless old tomb belonged to a knight-templar, or one of the crusado, because he lies cross-legged. Another promise I will make you is, that my love of abbeys shall not make me hate the Reformation till that makes me grow a Jacobite like the rest of my antiquarian predecessors; of whom, Dart in particular wrote Billingsgate against Cromwell and the regicides; and sir

Robert Atkins concludes his summary of the Stuarts with saying, "*that it is no reason, because they have been so, that this family should always continue unfortunate.*"

I have made my visit at Hagley as I intended. On my way I dined at Park-place, and lay at Oxford. As I was quite alone, I did not care to see any thing; but as soon as it was dark I ventured out, and the moon rose as I was wandering among the colleges, and gave me a charming venerable Gothic scene, which was not lessened by the monkish appearance of the old fellows stealing to their pleasures. Birmingham is large, and swarms with people and trade, but did not answer my expectation from any beauty in it: yet new as it is, I perceived how far I was got back from the London hegira; for every ale-house is here written *mug-house*, a name one has not heard of since the riots in the late king's time.

As I got into Worcestershire, I opened upon a landscape of country which I prefer even to Kent, which I had reckoned the most beautiful county in England: but this, with all the richness of Kent, is bounded with mountains. Sir George Lyttelton's house is immeasurably bad and old: one room at the top of the house, which was reckoned a *conceit* in those days, projects a vast way into the air. There are two or three curious pictures, and some of them extremely agreeable

to me for their relation to Grammont: there is *le serieux Lyttelton*, but too old for the date of that book; mademoiselle Stuart, lord Brounker, and lady Southesk; besides, a portrait of lord Clifford the treasurer, with his staff, but drawn in armour (though no soldier) out of flattery to Charles the second, as he said the most glorious part of his life was attending the king at the battle of Worcester. He might have said that it was as *glorious* as any part of his majesty's life. You might draw, but I can't describe the enchanting scenes of the park: it is a hill of three miles, but broke into all manner of beauty; such lawns, such wood, rills, cascades, and a thickness of verdure quite to the summit of the hill, and commanding such a vale of towns, and meadows, and woods extending quite to the Black mountain in Wales, that I quite forgot my favourite Thames! —Indeed, I prefer nothing to Hagley but mount Edgecumbe. There is extreme taste in the park: the seats are not the best, but there is not one absurdity. There is a ruined castle, built by Miller, that would get him his freedom even of Strawberry: it has the true rust of the barons' wars. Then there is a scene of a small lake with cascades falling down such a Parnassus! with a circular temple on the distant eminence; and there is such a fairy dale, with more cascades gushing out of rocks! and there is a hermitage, so exactly like those in Sadeler's prints, on the

brow of a shady mountain, stealing peeps into the glorious world below! and there is such a pretty well under a wood, like the Samaritan woman's in a picture of Nicolò Poussin! and there is such a wood without the park, enjoying such a prospect! and there is such a mountain on t'other side of the park commanding all prospects, that I wore out my eyes with gazing, my feet with climbing, and my tongue and my vocabulary with commending! The best notion I can give you of the satisfaction I showed, was, that sir George proposed to carry me to dine with my lord Foley; and when I showed reluctance, he said, "*Why, I thought you did not mind any strangers, if you were to see any thing!*" Think of my not minding strangers! I mind them so much, that I missed seeing Hartlebury-castle, and the bishop of Worcester's chapel of painted glass there, because it was his public day when I passed by his park.—Miller has built a Gothic house in the village at Hagley for a relation of sir George: but there he is not more than Miller; in his castle he is almost Bentley. There is a genteel tomb in the church to sir George's first wife, with a Cupid and a pretty urn in the Roman style.

You will be diverted with my distresses at Worcester. I set out boldly to walk down the high-street to the cathedral: I found it much more peopled than I intended, and, when I was quite embarked, discovered myself up to the ears in a

contested election. A new candidate had arrived the night before, and turned all their heads. Nothing comforted me, but that the opposition is to Mr. T****; and I purchased my passage very willingly with crying *No T****! No Jews!* However, the inn where I lay was Jerusalem itself, the very head-quarters, where T*** the Pharisee was expected; and I had scarce got into my room, before the victorious mob of his enemy, who had routed his advanced guard, broke open the gates of our inn, and almost murdered the ostler — and then carried him off to prison for being murdered.

The cathedral is pretty, and has several tombs, and clusters of light pillars of Derbyshire marble, lately cleaned. Gothicism and the restoration of that architecture, and not of the bastard breed, spreads extremely in this part of the world. Prince Arthur's tomb, from whence we took the paper for the hall and stair-case, to my great surprise, is on a less scale than the paper, and is not of brass but stone, and that wretchedly white-washed. The niches are very small, and the long slips in the middle are divided every now and then with the trefoil. There is a fine tomb for bishop Hough, in the Westminster-abbey style; but the obelisk at the back is not loaded with a globe and a human figure, like Mr. Kent's design for sir Isaac Newton: an absurdity which nothing but himself could surpass, when he placed three busts

at the foot of an altar—and, not content with that, placed them at the very angles—where they have as little to do as they have with Shakespeare.

From Worcester I went to see Malvern-abbey. It is situated half way up an immense mountain of that name: the mountain is very long, in shape like the prints of a whale's back: towards the larger end lies the town. Nothing remains but a beautiful gateway and the church, which is very large: every window has been glutted with painted glass, of which much remains, but it did not answer: blue and red there is in abundance, and good faces; but the portraits are so high, I could not distinguish them. Besides, the woman who showed me the church would pester me with Christ and king David, when I was hunting for John of Gaunt and king Edward. The greatest curiosity, at least what I had never seen before, was, the whole floor and far up the sides of the church has been, if I may call it so, wainscoted with red and yellow tiles, extremely polished, and diversified with coats of arms, and inscriptions, and mosaic. I have since found the same at Glocester, and have even been so fortunate as to purchase from the sexton about a dozen, which think what an acquisition for Strawberry! They are made of the natural earth of the country, which is a rich red clay, that produces every thing. All the lanes are full of all kind of trees, and enriched with large old apple-trees, that hang

over from one hedge to another. Worcester city is large and pretty. Glocester city is still better situated, but worse built, and not near so large. About a mile from Worcester you break upon a sweet view of the Severn. A little farther on the banks is Mr. Lechmere's house; but he has given strict charge to a troop of willows never to let him see the river: to his right hand extends the fairest meadow covered with cattle that ever you saw: at the end of it is the town of Upton, with a church half ruined, and a bridge of six arches, which I believe with little trouble he might see from his garden.

The vale increases in riches to Glocester. I staid two days at George Selwyn's house called Matson, which lies on Robin Hood's-hill: it is lofty enough for an Alp, yet is a mountain of turf to the very top, has wood scattered all over it, springs that long to be cascades in twenty places of it; and from the summit it beats even sir G. Lyttelton's views, by having the city of Glocester at its foot, and the Severn widening to the horizon. His house is small, but neat. King Charles lay here at the siege; and the duke of York, with typical fury, hacked and hewed the window-shutters of his chamber, as a memorandum of his being there. Here is a good picture of Dudley earl of Leicester in his later age, which he gave to sir Francis Walsingham, at whose house in Kent it remained till removed hither; and what

makes it very curious, is, his age marked on it, 54 in 1572. I had never been able to discover before in what year he was born. And here is the very flower-pot and counterfeit association, for which bishop Sprat was taken up, and the duke of Marlborough sent to the Tower. The reservoirs on the hill supply the city. The late Mr. Selwyn governed the borough by them—and I believe by some wine too. The bishop's house is pretty, and restored to the Gothic by the last bishop. Price has painted a large chapel-window for him, which is scarce inferior for colours, and is a much better picture than any of the old glass. The eating-room is handsome. As I am a protestant Goth, I was glad to worship bishop Hooper's room, from whence he was led to the stake; but I could almost have been a Hun, and set fire to the front of the house, which is a small pert portico, like the conveniencies at the end of a London garden. The outside of the cathedral is beautifully light; the pillars in the nave outrageously plump and heavy. There is a tomb of one Abraham Blackleach, a great curiosity; for, though the figures of him and his wife are cumbent, they are very graceful, designed by Vandyck, and well executed. Kent designed the screen; but knew no more there than he did any where else how to enter into the true Gothic taste. Sir Christopher Wren, who built the tower of the great gate-way at Christ-church, has

catched the graces of it as happily as you could do: there is particularly a niche between two compartments of a window, that is a master-piece.

But here is a *modernity*, which beats all antiquities for curiosity: Just by the high altar is a small pew hung with green damask, with curtains of the same; a small corner-cupboard, painted, carved and gilt, for books, in one corner, and two troughs of a bird-cage, with seeds and water. If any mayoress on earth was small enough to enclose herself in this tabernacle, or abstemious enough to feed on rape and canary, I should have sworn that it was the shrine of the queen of the aldermen. It belongs to a Mrs. Cotton, who, having lost a favourite daughter, is convinced her soul is transmigrated into a robin-red-breast; for which reason she passes her life in making an aviary of the cathedral of Gloucester. The chapter indulge this whim, as she contributes abundantly to glaze, whitewash, and ornament the church.

King Edward the second's tomb is very light and in good repair. The old wooden figure of Robert, the conqueror's unfortunate eldest son, is extremely genteel, and, though it may not be so ancient as his death, is in a taste very superior to any thing of much later ages. Our Lady's chapel has a bold kind of portal, and several ceilings of chapels, and tribunes in a beautiful taste: but of all delight, is what they call the abbot's cloister.

It is the very thing that you would build, when you had extracted all the quintessence of trefoils, arches, and lightness. In the church is a star-window of eight points, that is prettier than our rose-windows.

A little way from the town are the ruins of Lantony Priory: there remains a pretty old gate-way, which G. Selwyn has begged, to erect on the top of his mountain, and it will have a charming effect.

At Burford I saw the house of Mr. Lenthal, the descendant of the Speaker. The front is good; and a chapel connected by two or three arches, which let the garden appear through, has a pretty effect; but the inside of the mansion is bad and ill-furnished. Except a famous picture of sir Thomas More's family, the portraits are rubbish, though celebrated. I am told that the Speaker, who really had a fine collection, made his peace by presenting them to Cornbury, where they were, well known, till the duke of Marlborough bought that seat.

I can't go and describe so known a place as Oxford, which I saw pretty well on my return. The whole air of the town charms me;—and what remains of the true Gothic *un-Gibbs'd*, and the profusion of painted glass, were entertainment enough to me. In the picture-gallery are quantities of portraits; but in general they are not only not so much as copies, but *proxies*—so totally un-

like they are to the persons they pretend to represent. All I will tell you more of Oxford is, that Fashion has so far prevailed over her collegiate sister, Custom, that they have altered the hour of dinner from twelve to one. Does not it put one in mind of reformations in religion? One don't abolish Mahommedism; one only brings it back to where the impostor himself left it.—I think it is at the South-sea-house, where they have been forced to alter the hours of payment, instead of from ten to twelve, to from twelve to two; so much do even moneyed citizens sail with the current of idleness!

Was not I talking of religious sects? Methodism is quite decayed in Oxford, its cradle. In its stead, there prevails a delightful fantastic system, called the sect of the Hutchinsonians, of whom one seldom hears any thing in town. After much inquiry, all I can discover is, that their religion consists in driving Hebrew to its fountain head, till they find some word or other in every text of the Old Testament, which may seem figurative of something in the New, or at least of something that may happen God knows when, in consequence of the New. As their doctrine is novel, and requires much study, or at least much invention, one should think that they could not have settled half the canon of what they are to believe—and yet they go on zealously, trying to make and succeeding in making converts.—I

could not help smiling at the thoughts of *etymological salvation;* and I am sure you will smile when I tell you, that according to their gravest doctors, *Soap is an excellent type of Jesus Christ, and the York-buildings waterworks of the Trinity.* —I don't know whether this is not as entertaining as the passion of the Moravians for the *little side-hole!* Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Dec. 6, 1753.

I HAVE at last found a moment to answer your letter; a possession of which, I think, I have not been master these ten days. You must know that I have an uncle dead; a sort of event that could not possibly have been disagreeable to me, let his name have been what it would; and to make it still less unpleasant, here am I one of the heirs at law to a man worth thirty thousand pounds. One of the heirs you must construe, one of five. In short, my uncle Erasmus is dead, and I think at last we may depend on his having made no will. If a will should appear, we are but where we were; if it does not, it is not uncomfortable to have a little sum of money drop out of the clouds, to which one has as much right as any body, for-

which one has no obligation, and paid no flattery. This death and the circumstances have made extreme noise, but they are of an extent impossible to tell you within the compass of any letter, and I will not raise your curiosity when I cannot satisfy it, but by a narration, which I must reserve till I see you. The only event I know besides within this atmosphere, is the death of lord Burlington, who, I have just heard, has left every thing in his power to his relict. I tell you nothing of Jew bills and Jew motions, for I dare to say you have long been as weary of the words as I am. The only point that keeps up any attention, is expectation of a mail from Ireland, from whence we have heard, by a side wind, that the court have lost a question by six; you may imagine one wants to know more of this.

The opera is indifferent; the first man has a finer voice than Monticelli, but knows not what to do with it. Ancient Visconti does so much with her's that it is intolerable. There is a new play of Glover's, in which Boadicea the heroine rants as much as Visconti screams; but happily you hear no more of her after the end of the third act, till in the last scene somebody brings a card with her compliments, and she is very sorry she cannot wait upon you, but she is dead. Then there is a scene between lord Sussex and lord Cathcart, two captives, which is most incredibly absurd; but yet the parts are so well acted, the

dresses so fine, and two or three scenes pleasing enough, that it is worth seeing.

There are new young lords, fresh and fresh: two of them are much in vogue; lord Huntingdon and lord Stormont. I supped with them t'other night at lady Caroline Petersham's;[1] the latter is most cried up; but he is more reserved, seems sly, and to have sense; but I should not think extreme: yet it is not fair to judge on a silent man at first. The other is very lively and very agreeable. This is the state of the town you inquire after, and which you do inquire after as one does after Mr. Somebody that one used to see at Mr. Such-a-one's formerly: do you never intend to know more of us? or do you intend to leave me to wither upon the hands of the town, like Charles Stanhope and Mrs. Dunch? My cotemporaries seem to be all retiring to their proprieties. If I must too, positively I will go no farther than Strawberry-hill! You are very good to lament *our* gold fish: their whole history consists in their being stolen *à deux reprises*, the very week after I came to town.

Mr. B. is where he was, and well, and now and then makes me as happy as I can be, having lost him, with a charming drawing. We don't talk of his abode, for the Hecate his wife endeavours

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[1] Daughter of the duke of Grafton.

to discover it. Adieu! my best compliments to miss Montagu.

I am,

Most truly yours.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, Dec. 19, 1753.

I LITTLE thought when I parted with you, my dear sir, that your absence[1] could indemnify me so well for itself; I still less expected that I should find you improving daily: but your letters grow more and more entertaining, your drawings more and more picturesque; you write with more wit, and paint with more *melancholy*, than ever any body did: your woody mountains hang down *somewhat so poetical*, as Mr. Ashe[2] said, that your own poet Gray will scarce keep tune with you. All this refers to your cascade scene and your letter. For the library, it cannot have the Straw-

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[1] Mr. Bentley was now in the island of Jersey, whither he had retired on account of the derangement of his affairs; and whither all the following letters are addressed to him.

[2] A nursery-man at Twickenham. He had served Pope. Mr. Walpole telling him he would have his trees planted irregularly, he said, "Yes, sir, I understand: you would have them hung down somewhat poetical."

berry imprimatur: the double arches and double pinnacles are most ungraceful; and the doors below the book-cases in Mr. Chute's design had a conventual look, which yours totally wants. For this time, we shall put your genius in commission, and, like some other regents, execute our own plan without minding our sovereign. For the chimney, I do not wonder you missed our instructions: we could not contrive to understand them ourselves; and therefore, determining nothing but to have the old picture stuck in a thicket of pinnacles, we left it to you to find out *the how*. I believe it will be a little difficult; but as I suppose *facere quia impossibile est*, is full as easy as *credere*, why — you must do it.

The present journal of the world and of me stands thus: King George II. does not go abroad — Some folks fear nephews,[3] as much as others hate uncles. The castle of Dublin has carried the Armagh election by one vote only — which is thought equivalent to losing it by twenty. Mr. Pelham has been very ill; I thought of St. Patrick's fire,[4] but it proved St. Antony's. Our house of

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[3] Frederic II. king of Prussia, nephew to George II. Mr. Walpole alludes to himself, who was upon bad terms with his uncle Horace Walpole, afterwards lord Walpole of Wolterton.

[4] Alluding to the disturbances and opposition to government, which took place in Ireland during the viceroyalty of Lionel duke of Dorset.

commons, mere poachers, are piddling with the torture of Leheup, who extracted so much money out of the lottery.

The robber of *Po Yang*[5] is discovered, and I hope will be put to death, without my pity interfering, as it has done for Mr. Shorter's servant,[6] or lady * * * * * * * * *'s, as it did for Maclean.[7] In short, it was a heron. I like this better than thieves, as I believe the gang will be more easily destroyed, though not mentioned in the king's speech or Fielding's treatises.

Lord **Clarendon, lord** Thanet, and lord Burlington, are **dead**. The second sent for his taylor, and asked him if he could make him a suit of mourning in eight hours: if he could, he would go into mourning for his brother Burlington[8]— but that he did not expect to live twelve hours himself.

There are two more volumes come out of sir Charles Grandison. I shall detain them till the last is published, and not think I postpone much of your pleasure. For my part, I stopped at the

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[5] Mr. Walpole had given this Chinese name to a pond of gold fish at Strawberry-hill.

[6] A Swiss servant of Erasmus Shorter's, maternal uncle to Mr. Walpole, who was not without suspicion of having hastened his master's death.

[7] A celebrated highwayman.

[8] The countesses of Thanet and Burlington were sisters

fourth; I was so tired of sets of people getting together, and saying, *Pray, miss, with whom are you in love?* and of mighty good young men that convert your *Mr. M*****s* in the twinkling of a sermon!—You have not been much more diverted, I fear, with Hogarth's book[9]—'Tis very silly!—Palmyra is come forth, and is a noble book; the prints finely engraved, and an admirable dissertation before it. My wonder is much abated: the Palmyrene empire which I had figured, shrunk to a small trading city with some magnificent public buildings out of proportion to the dignity of the place.

The operas succeed pretty well; and music has so much recovered its power of charming, that there is started up a burletta at Covent-garden, that has half the vogue of the old Beggar's opera: indeed there is a soubrette, called the Nicolina, who, besides being pretty, has more vivacity and variety of humour than ever existed in any creature.

Yours ever.

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[9] The Analysis of Beauty.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, March 2, 1754.

AFTER calling two or three times without finding him, I wrote yesterday to lord Granville,[1] and received a most gracious answer, but desiring to see me. I went. He repeated all your history with him, and mentioned your vivacity at parting; however, consented to give you the apartment, with great good humour, and said he would write to his bailiff; and added, laughing, that he had an old cross housekeeper, who had regularly quarrelled with all his grantees. It is well that some of your desires, though unfortunately the most trifling, depend on me alone, as those at least are sure of being executed. By Tuesday's coach there will go to Southampton, two orange-trees, two Arabian jasmines, some tuberose roots, and plenty of cypress seeds, which last I send you in lieu of the olive-trees, none of which are yet come over.

The weather grows fine, and I have resumed little flights to Strawberry. I carried G. Montagu thither, who was in raptures, and screamed, and hooped and hollaed, and danced, and crossed

1 John earl Granville, then secretary of state, had an estate in Jersey.

himself a thousand times over. He returns to-morrow to Greatworth, and I fear will give himself up entirely to country *squirehood*. But what will you say to greater honour which Strawberry has received? Nolkejumskoi has been to see it, and liked the windows and staircase. I can't conceive how he entered it. I should have figured him like Gulliver cutting down some of the largest oaks in Windsor forest to make joint-stools, in order to straddle over the battlements and peep in at the windows of Lilliput. I can't deny myself this reflection (even though he liked Strawberry), as he has not employed you as an architect.

Still there is little news. To-day it is said that lord George Sackville is summoned in haste from Ireland, where the grand juries are going to petition for the re-sitting of the parliament. Hitherto they have done nothing but invent satirical healths, which I believe gratify a taste more peculiar to Ireland than politics, drinking. We have had one considerable day in the house of commons here. Lord Egmont, in a very long and fine speech, opposed a new mutiny-bill for the troops going to the East Indies (which I believe occasioned the reports with you of an approaching war). Mr. Conway got infinite reputation by a most charming speech in answer to him, in which he displayed a system of military learning, which was at once new, striking, and entertaining.

I had carried monsieur de Gisors thither, who began to take notes of all I explained to him: but I begged he would not; for, the question regarding French politics, I concluded the Speaker would never have done storming at the Gaul's collecting intelligence in the very senate-house. Lord Holderness made a magnificent ball for these foreigners last week: there were 140 people, and most staid supper. Two of my Frenchmen learnt country-dances, and succeeded very well. T'other night they danced minuetes for the entertainment of the king at the masquerade; and then he sent for lady Coventry to dance: it was quite like Herodias—and I believe if he had offered her a boon, she would have chosen the head of *St. John*—I believe I told you of her passion for the young lord B * * * *.

Dr. Meade is dead, and his collection going to be sold—I fear I have not virtue enough to resist his miniatures—I shall be ruined!

I shall tell you a new instance of the Sortes Walpolianæ: I lately bought an old volume of pamphlets; I found at the end a history of the dukes of Lorrain, and with that an account of a series of their medals, of which, says the author, there are but two sets in England. It so happens that I bought a set above ten years ago at lord Oxford's sale; and on examination I found the duchess, wife of duke René, has a head-dress, allowing for being modernised, as the medals are

modern, which is evidently the same with that figure in my marriage of Henry VI. which I had imagined was of her. It is said to be taken from her tomb at Angiers; and that I might not decide too quickly *en connoisseur*, I have sent to Angiers for a draught of the tomb.

Poor Mr. Chute was here yesterday, the first going out after a confinement of thirteen weeks; but he is pretty well. We have determined upon the plan for the library, which we find will fall in exactly with the proportions of the room, with no variations from the little door-case of St. Paul's, but widening the larger arches. I believe I shall beg your assistance again about the chimney-piece and ceiling; but I can decide nothing till I have been again at Strawberry. Adieu! my dear sir.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, March 6, 1754.

My dear Sir,

You will be surprised at my writing again so very soon; but unpleasant as it is to be the bearer of ill news,[1] I flattered myself that you would endure

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[1] This is an ironic letter on the death of Henry Pelham, first

it better from me, than to be shocked with it from an indifferent hand, who would not have the same management for your tenderness and delicacy as I naturally shall, who always feel for you, and on this occasion with you! You are very unfortunate: you have not many real friends, and you lose—for I must tell it you, the chief of them! indeed, the only one who could have been of real use to you—for what can *I* do, but wish, and attempt, and miscarry?—or from whom could I have hoped assistance for you, or warmth for myself and my friends, but from the friend I have this morning lost?—But it is too selfish to be talking of our losses, when Britain, Europe, the world, the king, Jack Roberts,[2] lord Barnard,[3] have lost their guardian angel.—What are private misfortunes to the affliction of one's country? or how inglorious is an Englishman to bewail himself, when a true patriot should be acting for the good of mankind!—Indeed, if it is possible to feel any comfort, it is from seeing how many true Englishmen, how many *true Scotchmen*, are zealous to replace the loss, and snatch at the rudder of the state, amidst this storm and danger! Oh! my friend, how will your heart glow with melan-

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lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, with whom Mr. Walpole was on ill terms.

[2] John Roberts, esquire, secretary to Mr. Pelham.

[3] Henry Vane, afterwards earl of Darlington.

choly admiration, when I tell you, that even the poor duke of Newcastle himself conquers the torrent of his grief, and has promised Mrs. Betty Spence,[4] and Mr. Graham the apothecary, that, rather than abandon England to its evil genius, he will even submit to be lord treasurer himself? My lord chancellor,[5] too, is said to be willing to devote himself in the same manner for the good of his country. Lord Hartington[6] is the most inconsolable of all; and when Mrs. Molly Bodens[7] and Mrs. G. were entreated by some of the cabinet council to ask him whom he wished to have minister, the only answer they could draw from him was, *A Whig! a Whig!* As for lord B. I may truly say, he is humbled and licks the dust; for his tongue, which never used to hang below the waistband of his breeches, is now dropped down to his shoe-buckles; and had not Mr. Stone assured him, that if the worst came to the worst, they could but make their fortunes under another family, I don't know whether he would not have despaired of the commonwealth. But though I sincerely pity so good a citizen, I cannot help feeling most for poor lord Holderness, who sees

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[4] Companion to the duchess of Newcastle.

[5] Philip earl of Hardwicke.

[6] William, afterwards fourth duke of Devonshire.

[7] Companion of lady Burlington, lord Hartington's mother-in-law.

a scheme of glory dashed which would have added new lustre to the British annals, and have transmitted the name D'Arcy down to latest posterity. He had but just taken Mr. Mason the poet into his house *to write his deserts*; and he had just reason to expect that the secretary's office would have gained a superiority over that of France and and Italy, which was unknown even to Walsingham.

I had written thus far, and perhaps should have elegized on for a page or two farther, when Harry, who has no idea of the dignity of grief, blundered in, with satisfaction in his countenance, and thrust two pacquets from you into my hand.—Alas! he little knew that I was incapable of tasting any satisfaction but in the indulgence of my concern.—I was once going to commit them to the devouring flames, lest any light or vain sentence should tempt me to smile; but my turn for true philosophy checked my hand, and made me determine to prove that I could at once launch into the bosom of pleasure and be insensible to it. ——I have conquered; I have read your letters, and yet think of nothing but Mr. Pelham's death! Could lady * * * do thus? Could she receive a love-letter from Mr. * * *, and yet think only on her breathless lord?

Thursday, 7.

I WROTE the above last night, and have staid as

late as I could this evening, that I might be able to tell you who the person is in whom all the world is to discover the proper qualities for replacing the national loss. But, alas! the experience of two whole days has showed that the misfortune is irreparable; and I don't know whether the elegies on his death will not be finished before there be any occasion for congratulations to his successor. The mystery is profound. How shocking it will be if things should go on just as they are! I mean by that, how mortifying if it is discovered, that when all the world thought Mr. Pelham did and could alone maintain the calm and carry on the government, even he was not necessary, and that it was the calm and the government that carried on themselves! However, this is not my opinion.—I believe all this *will make a party.*[8]

Good-night! There are two more new plays: Constantine, the better of them, expired the fourth night at Covent-garden. Virginia, by Garrick's acting and popularity, flourishes still: he has written a remarkably good epilogue to it. Lord Bolingbroke is come forth in five pompous quartos, two and a half new and most unorthodox. Warburton is resolved to answer, and the bishops

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[8] Mr. Walpole, when young, loved faction; and Mr. Bentley one day saying, "that he believed certain opinions would make a sect," Mr. W. said eagerly, "Will they make a party?"

not to answer him. I have not had a moment to look into it. Good-night!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, March 17, 1754.

In the confusion of things, I last week hazarded a free letter to you by the common post. The confusion is by no means ceased. However, as some circumstances may have rendered a desire of intelligence necessary, I send this by the coach, with the last volume of Sir Charles Grandison, for its chaperon.

After all the world had been named for chancellor of the exchequer, and my lord chief justice Lee, who is no part of the world, really made so *pro tempore*; lord Hartington went to notify to Mr. Fox, that the cabinet council having given it as their unanimous opinion to the king, that the duke of Newcastle should be at the head of the treasury, and he (Mr. Fox) secretary of state with the management of the house of commons; his grace, who had submitted to so *oracular* a sentence, hoped Mr. Fox would not refuse to concur in so salutary a measure; and assured him, that *though* the duke would reserve the sole disposition of the secret service-money, his grace would

bestow his entire confidence on Mr. Fox, and acquaint him with the most minute details of that service. Mr. Fox bowed and obeyed—and, as a preliminary step, received the chancellor's[1] absolution. From thence he attended his—and our new master.—But either grief for his brother's death, or joy for it, had so intoxicated the new *maître du palais*, that he would not ratify any one of the conditions he had imposed: and though my lord Hartington's virtue interposed, and remonstrated on the purport of the message he had carried, the duke persisted in assuming the whole and undivided power himself, and left Mr. Fox no choice, but of obeying or disobeying, as he might choose. This produced the next day a letter from Mr. Fox, carried by my lord Hartington, in which he refused secretary of state, and pinned down the lie with which the new ministry is to commence. It was tried to be patched up at the chancellor's on Friday night, though ineffectually; and yesterday morning Mr. Fox in an audience desired to remain secretary at war. The duke immediately kissed hands—declared, in the most unusual manner, universal minister. Legge was to be chancellor of the exchequer; but I can't tell whether that disposition will hold, as lord Duplin is proclaimed the acting favourite.

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[1] With whom he was at variance.

The German sir Thomas Robinson was thought on for the secretary's seals; but has just sense enough to be unwilling to accept them under so ridiculous an administration.——This is the first act of the comedy.

On Friday this august remnant of the Pelhams went to court for the first time. At the foot of the stairs he cried and sunk down: the yeomen of the guard were forced to drag him up under the arms. When the closet-door opened, he flung himself at his length at the king's feet, sobbed, and cried "God bless your majesty! God preserve your majesty!" and lay there howling and embracing the king's knees, with one foot so extended, that my lord C * * *, who was *luckily* in waiting, and begged the standers-by to retire, with "For God's sake, gentlemen, don't look at a great man in distress," endeavouring to shut the door, caught his grace's foot, and made him roar out with pain.

You can have no notion of what points of ceremony have been agitated about the tears of the family. George Selwyn was told that my lady Catherine had not shed one tear: "And pray," said he, "don't she intend it?" It is settled that Mrs. * * * is not to cry till she is brought-to-bed.

You love George Selwyn's bons-mots: this crisis has redoubled them: here is one of his best. My lord chancellor is to be earl of Clarendon:—"Yes," said Selwyn, from the very summit of the

whites of his demure eyes; "and I suppose he will get the title of Rochester for his son-in-law, my lord A * * *." Do you think he will ever lose the title of lord Rochester?

I expected that we should have been over-run with elegies and panegyrics: indeed I comforted myself, that one word in all of them would atone for the rest—the *late* Mr. Pelham. But the world seems to allow that their universal attachment and submission was universal interestedness: there has not been published a single encomium: orator Henley alone has held forth in his praise;—yesterday it was on *charming lady Catherine*.[2] Don't you think it should have been in these words, in his usual style?

Oratory-chapel.—Right reason; madness; charming lady Catherine; hell-fire, &c.

Monday, March 18.

ALMOST as extraordinary news as our political, is, that it has snowed ten days successively, and most part of each day: it is living in Muscovy, amid ice and revolutions: I hope lodgings will begin to let a little dear in Siberia! Beckford and Delaval, two celebrated partisans, met lately at Shaftesbury, where they oppose one another: the latter said,

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[2] Lady Catherine Pelham.

" Art thou the man, whom men fam'd Beckford call?"

T'other replied,

" Art thou the much more famous Delaval?"

But to leave politics, and change of ministries, and to come to something of *real* consequence, I must apply you to my library ceiling; of which I send you some rudiments. I propose to have it all painted by Clermont; the principal part in *chiaro scuro*, on the design which you drew for the Paraclete: but as that pattern would be surfeiting so often repeated in an extension of 20 feet by 30, I propose to break and enliven it by compartments in colours, according to the enclosed sketch, which you must adjust and dimension. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, March 19, 1754.

You *will* live in the country; and then you are amazed that people use you ill. Don't mistake me: I don't mean that you deserve to be ill-treated for living in the country; at least only by those who love and miss you; but if you inhabited the town a little, you would not quite so much expect uprightness, nor be so surprised at ingra-

titude and neglect. I am far from disposed to justify the great Cû; but when you had declined being *his* servant, do you wonder, that he will not serve *your* friends! I will tell you what, if the news of to-day holds at all, which is what no one piece of news of this last fortnight has done, you may be worse used by your cousin as soon as you please, for he is one of the first upon the list, for secretary of state, in the room of the duke of Newcastle. Now again are you such a rusticated animal as to suppose, that the duke is dismissed for inability, on the death of his brother. So far from it, it is already certainly known, that it was he who supported Mr. Pelham, and the impediments and rubs, thrown in the way of absolute power long ago, were the effects of the latter's timidity and irresolution. The duke, freed from that clog, has declared himself sole minister, and the king has kissed his hand upon it. Mr. Fox, who was the only man in England that objected to this plan, is to be sent to a prison, which is building on the coast of Sussex, after the model of Fort l'Eveque, under the direction of Mr. Taffee.

Harry Legge is to be chancellor of the exchequer; but the declared favour rests on lord Duplin.[1] Sir George Lyttleton is to be treasurer of

[1] Son of the earl of Kinnoul.

the navy! The parliament is to be dissolved on the fourth of next month, till when, I suppose none of the changes will take place. These are the politics of the day; but as they are a little fluctuating, notwithstanding the steadiness of the new first minister, I will not answer that they will hold true to Greatworth: nothing lasts now but the bad weather.

I went two days ago, with lady Ailesbury, and Mr. Conway, and Miss Anne, to hear the rehearsal of Mrs. Clive's new farce, which is very droll, with very pretty music.

Yours ever.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

Arlington-street, April 30, 1754.

My God! Farinelli, what has this nation done to the king of Spain, that the moment we have any thing dear and precious, he should tear it from us?——This is not the beginning of my letter to you, nor does it allude to *Mr. Bentley:* much less is it relative to the captivity of the ten tribes; nor does *the king* signify Benhadad, or Tiglath-pileser; nor Spain, Assyria, as doctor Pocock or Warburton, misled by dissimilitude of names, or by the Septuagint, may for very good reasons imagine—but it is literally the commencement of my lady

Rich's[1] epistle to Farinelli, on the recall of general Wall, as she relates it herself. It serves extremely well for my own lamentation, when I sit down by the waters of Strawberry, and think of ye, O Chute and Bentley!

I have seen Creusa, and more than agree with you: it is the only new tragedy that I ever saw, and really liked. The plot is most interesting, and, though so complicated, quite clear and natural. The circumstance of so much distress being brought on by characters, every one good, yet acting consistently with their principles towards the misfortunes of the drama, is quite new and pleasing. Nothing offended me but that lisping miss Haughton, whose every speech is inarticulately oracular.

I was last night at a little ball at lady Anne Furnese's for the new lords, Dartmouth and North; but nothing passed worth relating: indeed the only event since you left London was the tragi-comedy that was acted last Saturday at the Opera. One of the dramatic guards fell flat on his face and motionless in an apoplectic fit. The princess[2] and her children were there. Miss Chudleigh, who, *apparemment* had never seen a

[1] One of the daughters and coheiresses of the lord Mohun killed in a duel with duke Hamilton.

[2] The princess of Wales, mother to his present majesty.

man fall on his face before, went into the most theatric fit of kicking and shrieking that ever was seen. Several other women, who were preparing their fits, were so distanced, that she had the whole house to herself, and indeed such a confusion for half an hour I never saw! The next day at my lady Townshend's old Charles Stanhope asked what these fits were called? Charles Townshend replied, "*The true convulsive fits, to be had only of the maker.*"

Adieu, my dear sir! To-day looks summerish, but we have no rain yet.

Yours ever.

To JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 14, 1754.

My dear Sir,

I wrote to you the last day of last month: I only mention it, to show you that I am punctual to your desire. It is my only reason for writing to-day, for I have nothing new to tell you. The town is empty, dusty, and disagreeable; the country is cold and comfortless; consequently I daily run from one to t'other, as if both were so charming that I did not know which to prefer. I am at present employed in no very lively manner; in reading a treatise on commerce, which

count Perron has lent me, of his own writing: this obliges me to go through with it, though the subject and the style of the French would not engage me much. It does not want sense.

T'other night a description was given me of the most extraordinary declaration of love that ever was made. Have you seen young Poniatowski?[1] He is very handsome. You *have* seen the figure of the duchess of Gordon, who looks like a raw-boned Scotch metaphysician that has got a red face by drinking water. One day at the drawing-room, having never spoken to him, she sent one of the foreign ministers to invite Poniatowski to dinner with her for the next day. He bowed, and went. The moment the door opened, her two little sons, attired like Cupids with bows and arrows, shot at him, and one of them literally hit his hair, and was very near putting his eye out, and hindering his casting it to the couch

Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.

The only company besides this highland goddess were two Scotchmen, who could not speak a word of any language but their own Erse; and to complete his astonishment at this allegorical entertain-

[1] Stanislaus, the late ill-fated king of Poland.

ment, with the dessert there entered a little horse, and galloped round the table; a hieroglyphic I cannot solve. Poniatowski accounts for this profusion of kindness by his great-grandmother being a Gordon; but I believe it is to be accounted for by * * * * *

Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 18, 1754.

My dear Sir,

Unless you will be exact in dating your letters, you will occasion me much confusion. Since the undated one which I mentioned in my last, I have received another as unregistered, with the fragment of the rock, telling me of one which had set sail on the eighteenth, I suppose of last month, and been driven back: this I conclude was the former undated. Yesterday I received a longer, tipped with May 8th. You must submit to this lecture, and I hope will amend by it. I cannot promise that I shall correct myself much in the intention I had of writing to you seldomer and shorter at this time of year. If you could be persuaded how insignificant I think all I do, how

little important it is even to myself, you would not wonder that I have not much *empressement* to give the detail of it to any body else. Little excursions to Strawberry, little parties to dine there, and many jaunts to hurry Bromwich, and the carver, and Clermont, are my material occupations. Think of sending these 'cross the sea! —The times produce nothing: there is neither party, nor controversy, nor gallantry, nor fashion, nor literature—the whole proceeds like farmers regulating themselves, their business, their views, their diversions, by the almanac: Mr. Pelham's death has scarce produced a change; the changes in Ireland, scarce a murmur. Even in France the squabbles of the parliament and clergy are under the same opiate influence.—I don't believe that mademoiselle Murphy (who is delivered of a prince, and is lodged openly at Versailles) and madame Pompadour will mix the least grain of ratsbane in one another's tea. I, who love to ride in the whirlwind, cannot record the yawns of such an age!

The little that I believe you would care to know relating to the Strawberry annals, is, that the great tower is finished on the outside, and the whole whitened, and has a charming effect, especially as the verdure of this year is beyond what I have ever seen it: the grove nearest the house comes on much: you know I had almost despaired of its ever making a figure. The bow-

window room over the supper-parlour is finished; hung with a plain blue paper, with a chintz bed and chairs; my father and mother over the chimney in the Gibbons frame, about which you know we were in dispute what to do. I have fixed on black and gold, and it has a charming effect over your chimney with the two dropping points, which is executed exactly; and the old grate of Henry VIII. which you bought, is within it. In each pannel round the room is a single picture; Gray's, sir Charles Williams's, and yours, in their black and gold frames; mine is to match yours; and on each side the door are the pictures of Mr. Churchill and lady Mary, with their son, on one side, Mr. Conway and lady Ailesbury on the other. You can't imagine how new and pretty this furniture is.—I believe I must get you to send me an attestation under your hand that you knew nothing of it, that Mr. Rigby may allow that at least this one room was by my own direction. As the library and great parlour grow finished, you shall have exact notice.

From Mabland[1] I have little news to send you, but that the obelisk is danced from the middle of the rabbit-warren into his neighbour's garden, and

[1] A cant name which Mr. Walpole had given to lord Radnor's whimsical house and grounds at Twickenham.

he pays a ground-rent for looking at it there. His shrubs are hitherto unmolested,

Et Marybonıacos[2] gaudet revirescere lucos!

The town is as busy again as ever on the affair of Canning, who has been tried for perjury. The jury would have brought her in guilty of perjury, but not wilful, till the judge informed them that that would rather be an Irish verdict: they then brought her in simply guilty, but recommended her. In short, nothing is discovered: the most general opinion is that she was robbed, but by some other gipsy. For my own part, I am not at all brought to believe her story, nor shall, till I hear that living seven-and-twenty days without eating is among one of those secrets for doing impossibilities, which I suppose will be at last found out. You know my system is, that every thing will be found out, and about the time that I am dead, even some art of living for ever.

You was in pain for me, and indeed I was in pain for myself, on the prospect of the sale of Dr. Meade's miniatures. You may be easy; it is more than I am quite; for it is come out that the late prince of Wales had bought them every one.

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[2] Lord Radnor's garden was full of statues, &c. like that at Marybone.

I have not yet had time to have your granite examined, but will next week. If you have not noticed to your sisters any present of Ormer shells, I shall contradict myself, and accept them for my lady Lyttleton, who is making a grotto. As many as you can send conveniently, and any thing for the same use, will be very acceptable. You will laugh when I tell you that I am employed to reconcile sir George and Moore;[3] the latter has been very flippant, say impertinent, on the latter's giving a little place to Bower, in preference to him.—Think of my being the mediator?

The parliament is to meet for a few days the end of this month, to give perfection to the regency-bill. If the king dies before the end of this month, the old parliament revives, which would make tolerable confusion, considering what sums have been laid out on seats in this.—Adieu! This letter did not come kindly; I reckon it rather extorted from me, and therefore hope it will not amuse. However, I am in tolerable charity with you, and

Yours ever.

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[3] Author of The World, and some plays and poems. Moore had written in defence of lord Lyttelton against the Letters to the Whigs, which were not known to be Mr. Walpole's.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 21, 1754.

I DID not intend to write to you till after Thursday, when all your Boscawens, Rices, and Trevors are to dine at Strawberry-hill; but an event has happened, of which I cannot delay giving you the instant pleasurable notice: now will you, according to your custom, be guessing, and according to your custom, guessing wrong; but lest you should from my spirits make any undutiful or disloyal conjectures for me, know, that the great Cû[1] of the Vine is dead, and that John the first was yesterday proclaimed undoubted monarch. Nay, champion Dimmock himself shall cut the throat of any Tracy, Atkins, or Harrison, who shall dare to gainsay the legality of his title. In short, there is no more will, than was left by the late Erasmus Shorter of particular memory.

I consulted madam Rice, and she advised my directing to you at Mrs. Whettenhall's; to whom I beg as many compliments as if she wrote herself "*La blanche Whitnell.*" As many to your sister Harriot and to your brother, who I hear is with you. I am sure, though both you and I had reason to be peevish with the poor Tigress, that

[1] Mr. Chute.

you grieve with me for her death. I do most sincerely, and for her Bessy; the man Tiger will be so sorry, that I am sure he will marry again to comfort himself. I am so tired with letters I have written on this event, that I can scarce hold the pen. How we shall wish for you on Thursday—*and shant you be proud to cock your tail at the Vine?* Adieu.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday, June 8, 1754.

By my computation you are about returned to Greatworth: I was so afraid of my letters missing you on the road, that I deferred till now telling you how much pleasure I shall have in seeing you and the colonel at Strawberry. I have long been mortified that for these three years you have seen it only in winter: it is now in the height of its greenth, blueth, gloomth, honey-suckle, and seringahood. I have no engagement till Wednesday se'nnight, when I am obliged to be in town on law business. You will have this tomorrow night; if I receive a letter, which I beg you will direct to London, on Tuesday or Wednesday, I will meet you here whatever day you

will be so good as to appoint. I thank the colonel a thousand times. I cannot write a word more, for I am getting into the chaise to whisk to the Vine for two days, but shall be in town on Tuesday night. Adieu.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 29, 1754.

I SHALL take care to send your letter the first time I write to Mr. Bentley. It is above a fortnight since I heard from him. I am much disappointed at not having seen you yet; I love you should execute your intentions, while you intend them, because you are a little apt to alter your mind, and as I have set mine on your seeing Strawberry-hill this summer, while it is in its beauty, you will really mortify me by changing your purpose.

It is in vain that you ask for news: I was in town two days ago, but heard nothing; indeed, there were not people enough either to cause or make news. Lady Caroline Petersham had scraped together a few foreigners, after her christening; but I cannot say that the party was much livelier than if it had met at Madame Montandres'. You

must let me know a little beforehand, when you have fixed your time for coming, because, as I am towards flying about on my summer expeditions, I should be unhappy not to be here just when you would like it. Adieu.

Yours ever.

P. S. I supped at White's the other night with the great Cû, and he was by far more gracious, both on your topic and my own, than ever I knew him.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday, July 6, 1754.

YOUR letter certainly stopped to drink somewhere by the way, I suppose with the hearty hostess at the Windmill; for, though written on Wednesday, it arrived here but this morning: it could not have travelled more deliberately in the speaker's body-coach. I am concerned, because, your fishmonger not being arrived, I fear you have staid for my answer. The fish[1] are apprized that they are to *ride* over to Park-place, and are ready booted and spurred; and the moment their pad

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[1] Gold fish.

arrives, they shall set forth. I would accompany them on a pillion, if I were not waiting for lady Mary,[2] who has desired to bring her poor little sick girl here for a few days to try the air. You know how courteous a knight I am to distrest virgins of five years old, and that my castle-gates are always open to them.[3] You will, I am sure, accept this excuse for some days; and as soon as ever my hospitality is completed, I will be ready to obey your summons, though you should send a water-pot for me. I am in no fear of not finding you in perfect verdure; for the sun, I believe, is gone a great way off to some races or other, where his horses are to run for a king's plate: we have not heard of him in this neighbourhood. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 9, 1754.

I ONLY write a letter for company to the enclosed one. Mr. Chute is returned from the Vine, and

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[2] Lady Mary Churchill.

[3] Mr Conway's only daughter had been left with Mr. Walpole at Strawberry-hill, when he and lady Ailesbury went to Ireland with his regiment.

gives you a thousand thanks for your letter; and if ever he writes, I don't doubt but it will be to you. Gray and he come hither to-morrow, and I am promised Montagu and the [1]colonel in about a fortnight——How naturally my pen adds, but when does Mr. Bentley come? I am sure Mr. Wicks wants to ask me the same question every day—*Speak to it, Horatio!*—Sir Charles Williams brought his eldest daughter hither last week: she is one of your real admirers, and, without its being proposed to her, went on the bowling-green, and drew a perspective view of the castle from the angle, in a manner to deserve the thanks of the *committee*:[2] she is to be married to my lord Essex in a week, and I begged she would make you overseer of the works at Cashiobury. Sir Charles told me, that on the duke of Bedford's wanting a Chinese house at Woburn, he said, "Why don't your grace speak to Mr. Walpole? He has the prettiest plan in the world for one."—"Oh," replied the duke, "but then it would be too dear!" I hope this was a very great œconomy, or I am sure ours would be very great extravagance——only think of a plan for little Strawberry giving the alarm to thirty thousand

[1] Charles Montagu.

[2] Mr. Walpole in these letters calls the Strawberry committee, those of his friends who had assisted in the plans and Gothic ornaments of Strawberry-hill.

pounds a year!—My dear sir, it is time to retrench! Pray send me a slice of granite[3] no bigger than a Naples biscuit.

The monument for my mother is at last erected: it puts me in mind of the manner of interring the kings of France: when the reigning one dies, the last before him is buried. Will you believe that I have not yet seen the tomb? None of my acquaintance were in town, and I literally had not courage to venture alone among the Westminster-boys at the abbey; they are as formidable to me as the ship-carpenters at Portsmouth. I think I have showed you the inscription, and therefore I don't send it you.

I was reading t'other day the Life of colonel Codrington, who founded the library at All Souls: he left a large estate for the propagation of the gospel, and ordered that three hundred negroes should constantly be employed upon it: did one ever hear a more truly Christian charity, than keeping up a perpetuity of three hundred slaves to look after the gospel's estate? How could one intend a religious legacy, and miss the disposition of that estate for delivering three hundred negroes from the most shocking slavery imaginable?

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[3] Mr. Walpole had commissioned Mr. Bentley to send him a piece of the granite found in the island of Jersey, for a sideboard in his dining-room.

Must devotion be twisted into the unfeeling interests of trade? I must revenge myself for the horror this fact has given me, and tell you a story of Gideon.[4] He breeds his children Christians: he had a mind to know what proficience his son had made in his new religion; so, says he, I began, and asked him, who made him? He said, God. I then asked him, who redeemed him? He replied very readily, Christ. Well, then I was at the end of my interrogatories, and did not know what other question to put to him—I said, Who—who—I did not know what to say—at last I said, Who gave you that hat? The Holy Ghost, said the boy.—Did you ever hear a better catechism?—The great cry against Nugent at Bristol was for having voted for the Jew bill: one old woman said, "What, must we be represented by a Jew and an Irishman?" He replied with great quickness, "My good dame, if you will step aside with me into a corner, I will show you that I am *not* a Jew, and that *I am* an Irishman."

The princess[5] has breakfasted at the long sir Thomas Robinson's at Whitehall: my lady Townshend will never forgive it. The second[6] dowager of Somerset is gone to know whether all

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4 Sampson Gideon, a noted rich Jew.

5 Of Wales.

6 Frances Thynne.

her letters from the living to the dead have been received. Before I bid you good-night, I must tell you of an admirable curiosity: I was looking over one of our antiquarian volumes, and in the description of Leeds is an account of Mr. Thoresby's famous museum there — What do you think is one of the rarities? *A knife taken from one of the Mohocks! Whether tradition is infallible or not,* as you say, I think so authentic a relique will make their history indisputable — Castles, Chinese houses, tombs, negroes, Jews, Irishmen, princesses, and Mohocks — what a farrago do I send you! I trust that a letter from England to Jersey has an imposing air, and that you don't presume to laugh at any thing that comes from your mother island. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Aug. 29, 1754.

You may be sure that I shall always be glad to see you whenever you like to come hither, but I cannot help being sorry that you are determined not to like the place, nor to let the colonel like it; a conclusion I may very justly make, when I think for these four years you have contrived to visit it only when there is not a leaf upon the trees.

Villas are generally designed for summer: you are the single person, who think they look best in winter. You have still a more unlucky thought; which is, to visit the Vine in October. When I saw it in the middle of summer, it was excessively damp; you will find it a little difficult to persuade me to accompany you thither on stilts, and I believe Mr. Chute will not be quite happy that you prefer that season; but for this I cannot answer at present, for he is at Mr. Morris's in Cornwall. I shall expect you and the colonel here at the time you appoint. I engage for no farther, unless it is a very fine season indeed. I beg my compliments to miss Montagu, and am,

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, November 8, 1754.

I HAVE finished all my parties, and am drawing towards a conclusion here: the parliament meets in ten days: the house, I hear, will be extremely full—curiosity drawing as many to town as party used to do. The minister[1] in the house of lords is a new sight in these days.

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[1] The duke of Newcastle.

Mr. Chute and I have been at Mr. Barret's[2] at Belhouse; I never saw a place for which one did not wish, so totally void of faults. What he has done is in Gothic, and very true, though not up to the perfection of the committee. The hall is pretty; the great dining-room hung with good family pictures; among which is his ancestor, the lord Dacre, who was hanged. I remember, when Barret was first initiated in the college of arms by the present dean of Exeter[3] at Cambridge, he was overjoyed at the first ancestor he *put up*, who was one of the murderers of Thomas Becket. The chimney-pieces, except one little miscarriage into total Ionic (he could not resist statuary and Siena marble), are all of a good king James the first Gothic. I saw the heronry so fatal to Po Yang, and told him that I was persuaded they were descended from Becket's assassin, and I hoped from my lord Dacre too. He carried us to see the famous plantations and buildings of the last lord Petre. They are the Brobdingnag of bad taste. The unfinished house is execrable, massive, and split through and through: it stands on the brow of a hill, rather to see *for* a prospect than to see one, and turns its back upon an outrageous avenue, which is closed with a screen of tall trees, because

[2] Afterwards lord Dacre.

[3] Dr. Charles Lyttelton.

he would not be at the expence of beautifying the back front of his house. The clumps are gigantic, and very ill placed.

George Montagu and the colonel have at last been here, and have screamed with approbation through the whole *Cu*-gamut. Indeed the library is delightful. They went to the Vine, and approved as much. Do you think we wished for you? I carried down incense and mass-books, and we had most catholic enjoyment of the chapel. In the evenings, indeed, we did *touch a card* a little to please George—so much, that truly I have scarce an idea left that is not spotted with clubs, hearts, spades, and diamonds. There is a vote of the Strawberry committee for great embellishments to the chapel, of which it will not be long before you hear something. It will not be longer than the spring, I trust, before you see something of it. In the mean time, to rest your impatience, I have enclosed a scratch of mine, which you are to draw out better, and try if you can give yourself a perfect idea of the place. All I can say is, that my sketch is at least more intelligible than Gray's was of Stoke, from which you made so like a picture.

Thank you much for the box of Guernsey lilies, which I have received. I have been packing up a few seeds, which have little merit but the merit they will have with you, that they come from the Vine and Strawberry. My chief employ in this

part of the world, except surveying my library, which has scarce any thing but the painting to finish, is planting at Mrs. Clive's, whither I remove all my superabundancies. I have lately planted the green lane, that leads from her garden to the common: "Well," said she, "when it is done, what shall we call it?"—"Why," said I, "what would you call it but Drury-lane?" I mentioned desiring some samples of your Swiss's[4] abilities: Mr. Chute and I even propose, if he should be tolerable, and would continue reasonable, to tempt him over hither, and make him work upon your designs—upon which, you know, it is not easy to make you work. If he improves upon our hands, do you think we shall purchase the fee-simple of him for so many years, as Mr. Smith did of Canaletti?[5] We will *sell to the English.* Can he paint perspectives and cathedral-isles, and holy glooms? I am sure you could make him paint delightful insides of the chapel at the Vine, and of the library here. I never come up the stairs without reflecting how different it is from its primitive state, when my lady T. all the

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[4] Mr. Muntz, a Swiss painter.

[5] Mr. Smith, the English consul at Venice, had engaged Canaletti for a certain number of years to paint exclusively for him, at a fixed price, and sold his pictures at an advanced price to English travellers.

way she came up the stairs, cried out, "Lord God! Jesus! what a house! It is just such a house as a parson's, where the children lie at the feet of the bed!" I can't say that to-day it puts me much in mind of another speech of my lady's, "that it would be a very pleasant place, if Mrs. Clive's face did not rise upon it and make it so hot!" The sun and Mrs. Clive seem gone for the winter.

The West-Indian war has thrown me into a new study: I read nothing but American voyages, and histories of plantations and settlements. Among all the Indian nations, I have contracted a particular intimacy with the Ontaouanoucs, a people with whom I beg you will be acquainted: they pique themselves upon speaking the purest dialect. How one should delight in the grammar and dictionary of their Crusca! My only fear is, that if any of them are taken prisoners, general Braddock is not a kind of man to have proper attentions to so polite a people; I am even apprehensive that he would damn them, and order them to be scalped, in the very worst plantation-accent. I don't know whether you know that none of the people of that immense continent have any labials: they tell you *que c'est ridicule* to shut the lips, in order to speak. Indeed I was as barbarous as any polite nation in the world, in supposing that there was nothing worth knowing among these charming savages. They are in particular great orators,

with this little variation from British eloquence, that at the end of every important paragraph they make a present; whereas we expect to receive one. They begin all their answers with recapitulating what has been said to them; and their method for this is, the respondent gives a little stick to each of the by-standers, who is, for his share, to remember such a paragraph of the speech that is to be answered. You will wonder that I should have given the preference to the Ontaouanoucs, when there is a much more extraordinary nation to the north of Canada, who have but one leg, and p * * * from behind their ear; but I own I had rather converse for any time with people who speak like Mr. Pitt, than with a nation of jugglers, who are only fit to go about the country, under the direction of Taafe and Montague.[6] Their existence I do not doubt; they are recorded by Petre Charlevoix, in his much admired history of New France, in which there are such outrageous legends of miracles for the propagation of the gospel, that his fables in natural history seem strict veracity.

Adieu! You write to me as seldom as if you were

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[6] Mr. Montague was the only son of lady Mary Wortley Montague. These gentlemen had been shut up in prison at Paris on a charge of cheating a Jew at cards. The particulars are curious, and may be found in Nichol's Literary Anecdotes, v. 4. p. 631.

in an island where the duke of N. was sole minister, parties at an end, and where every thing had done happening.

Yours ever.

P. S. I have just seen in the advertisements that there are arrived two new volumes of madame de Sevigné's Letters.—Adieu, my American studies!—adieu, even my favourite Ontaouanoucs!

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, November 11, 1754.

If you was dead, to be sure you would have got somebody to tell me so. If you was alive, to be sure in all this time you would have told me so yourself. It is a month to-day since I received a line from you. There was a Florentine ambassador here in Oliver's reign, who with great circumspection wrote to his court, "Some say the protector is dead, others say he is not: for my part, I believe neither one nor t'other." I quote this sage personage, to show you that I have a good precedent, in case I had a mind to continue neutral upon the point of your existence. I can't resolve to believe you dead, lest I should be forced to write to Mr. S. again to bemoan

you; and on the other hand, it is convenient to me to believe you living, because I have just received the enclosed from your sister, and the money from Ely. However, if you are actually dead, be so good as to order your executor to receive the money, and to answer your sister's letter. If you are not dead, I can tell you who is, and at the same time whose death is to remain as doubtful as yours till to-morrow morning. Don't be alarmed! it is only the queen dowager of Prussia. As *excessive* as the concern for her is at court, the whole royal family, out of great consideration for the mercers, lacemen, &c. agreed not to shed a tear for her till to-morrow morning, when the birth-day will be over; but they are all to rise by six o'clock to-morrow morning to cry quarts. This is the sum of all the news that I learnt to-day on coming from Strawberry-hill, except that lady Betty Waldegrave was robbed t'other night in Hyde-park, under the very noses of the lamps and the patrole. If any body is robbed at the ball at court to-night, you shall hear in my next dispatch. I told you in my last that I had just got two new volumes of madame Sevigné's letters; but I have been cruelly disappointed; they are two hundred letters which had been omitted in the former editions, as having little or nothing worth reading. How provoking, that they would at last let one see that she could write so many letters that were not worth reading! I

will tell you the truth: as they are certainly hers, I am glad to see them, but I cannot bear that any body else should. Is not that true sentiment? How would you like to see a letter of hers, describing a wild young Irish lord, a lord P * * *, who has lately made one of our ingenious wagers, to ride I don't know how many thousand miles in an hour, from Paris to Fontainebleau? But admire the *politesse* of that nation: instead of endeavouring to lame his horse, or to break his neck, that he might lose the wager, his antagonist and the spectators showed all the attention in the world to keep the road clear, and to remove even pebbles out of his way. They heaped coals of fire upon his head with all the good-breeding of the gospel. Adieu!—If my letters are short, at least my notes are long.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Nov. 16, 1754.

You are over-good to me, my dear sir, in giving yourself the trouble of telling me you was content with Strawberry-hill. I will not, however, tell you, that I am content with your being there, till you have seen it, in all its greenth and blueth.

Alas! I am sorry I cannot insist upon as much with the colonel.

Mr. Chute I believe was so pleased with the *tenebra* in his own chapel, that he has fairly buried himself in it. I have not even had so much as a burial card from him since.

The town is as full as I believe you thought the room was at your ball at Waldershare. I hear of nothing but the parts and merit of lord North. Nothing has happened yet, but sure so many *English* people cannot be assembled long without committing something extraordinary!

I have seen and conversed with our old friend Cope; I find him grown very old; I fear he finds me so too; at least as old as I ever intend to be. I find him very grave too, which I believe he does not find me.

Solomon and Hesther, as my lady Townshend calls Mr. Pelham and lady Hesther Grenville, espouse one another to-day. I know nothing more but a new fashion which my lady Hervey has brought from Paris. It is a tin funnel covered with green ribbon, and holds water, which the ladies wear to keep their bouquets fresh. I fear lady Caroline and some others will catch frequent colds and sore throats with overturning this reservoir.

A propos, there is a match certainly in agitation, which has very little of either Solomon or

Hesther in it. You will be sorry when I tell you, that lord Waldegrave certainly dis-Solomons himself with the Drax. Adieu, my dear sir; I congratulate miss Montagu on her good health, and am

Ever yours.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, Nov. 20, 1754.

If this does not turn out a scolding letter, I am much mistaken. I shall give way to it with the less scruple, as I think it shall be the last of the kind; not that you will mend, but I cannot support a commerce of visions! and therefore, whenever you send me mighty cheap schemes for finding out longitudes and philosophers' stones, you will excuse me if I only smile, and don't order them to be examined by my council.—For heaven's sake, don't be a projector! Is not it provoking, that, with the best parts in the world, you should have so gentle a portion of common sense? But I am clear, that you never will know the two things in the world that import you the most to know, yourself and me.—Thus much by way of preface: now for the detail.

You tell me in your letter of November 3d, that the quarry of granite might be rented at twenty

pounds or twenty shillings, I don't know which, no matter, per annum. When I can't get a table out of it, is it very likely you or I should get a fortune out of it? What signifies the cheapness of the rent? The cutting and shippage would be articles of some little consequence! Who should be supervisor? You, who are so good a manager, so attentive, so diligent, so expeditious, and so accurate? Don't you think our quarry would turn to account? Another article, to which I might apply the same questions, is the project for importation of French wine: it is odd that a scheme so cheap and so practicable should hitherto have been totally overlooked——One would think the breed of smugglers was lost, like the true spaniels, or genuine golden pippins! My dear sir, you know I never drink three glasses of any wine—Can you think I care whether they are sour or sweet, cheap or dear?—or do you think that I, who am always taking trouble to reduce my trouble into as compact a volume as I can, would tap such an article as importing my own wine? But now comes your last proposal about the Gothic paper. When you made me fix up mine, unpainted, engaging to paint it yourself, and yet could never be persuaded to paint a yard of it, till I was forced to give Bromwich's man God knows what to do it, would you make me believe that you will paint a room eighteen feet by fifteen?—But, seriously, if it is possible for

you to lay aside visions, don't be throwing continual discouragements in my way. I have told you seriously and emphatically, that I am labouring your restoration: the scheme is neither facile nor immediate:—but, for God's sake, act like a reasonable man. You have a family to whom you owe serious attention. Don't let me think, that if you return, you will set out upon every wild-goose chase, sticking to nothing, and neglecting chiefly the talents and genius which you have in such excellence, to start projects, which you have too much honesty and too little application ever to thrive by. This advice is; perhaps, worded harshly: but you know the heart from which it proceeds, and you know that, with all my prejudice to it, I can't even pardon your wit, when it is employed to dress up schemes that I think romantic. The glasses and Ray's Proverbs you shall have, and some more gold-fish, when I have leisure to go to Strawberry; for you know I don't suffer any fisheries to be carried on there in my absence.

I am as newsless as in the dead of summer: the parliament produces nothing but elections: there has already been one division on the Oxfordshire of two hundred and sixty-seven whigs to ninety-seven tories: you may calculate the burial of that election easily from these numbers. The queen of Prussia is not dead, as I told you in my last. If you have shed many tears for her, you may set

them off to the account of our son-in-law the Prince of Hesse, who is turned Roman catholic. One is in this age so unused to conversions above the rank of a house-maid turned methodist, that it occasions as much surprise as if one had heard that he had been initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries. Are not you prodigiously alarmed for the protestant interest in Germany?

We have operas, burlettas, cargoes of Italian dancers, and none good but the Mingotti, a very fine figure and actress. I don't know a single *bon-mot* that is new: George Selwyn has not waked yet for the winter. You will believe that, when I tell you, that t'other night having lost eight hundred pounds at hazard, he fell asleep upon the table with near half as much more before him, and slept for three hours, with every body stamping the box close at his ear. He will say prodigiously good things when he does wake. In the mean time can you be *content* with one of madame Sevigné's best *bons-mots*, which I have found amongst her new letters? Do you remember her German friend the princess of Tarente, who was always in mourning for some sovereign prince or princess? One day madame de Sevigné happening to meet her in colours, made her a low curtsey, and said, "*Madame, je me rejouis de la santé de l'Europe.*" I think I may apply another of her speeches, which pleased me, to what I have said to you in the former part

of my letter. Mademoiselle du Plessis had said something she disapproved: madame Sevigné said to her, "*Mais que cela est sot, car je veux vous parler doucement.*" Adieu!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, Friday, December 13, 1754.

"If we do not make this effort to recover our dignity, we shall only sit here to register the arbitrary edicts of one too powerful a subject!"—*Non riconosci tu l'altero viso?* Don't you at once know the style? Shake those words all altogether, and see if they can be any thing but the *disjecti membra* of Pitt!—In short, about a fortnight ago, this bomb burst. Pitt, who is well, is married, is dissatisfied—not with his bride, but with the duke of Newcastle; has twice thundered out his dissatisfaction in parliament, and was seconded by Fox. The event was exactly what I dare say you have already foreseen. Pitt *was to be* turned out; overtures were made to Fox; Pitt is *not* turned out; Fox is quieted with the dignity of cabinet-counsellor, and the duke of N. remains affronted

—and omnipotent. The commentary on this text is too long for a letter; it may be developed some time or other. This scene has produced a diverting interlude: sir George Lyttelton, who could not reconcile his content with Mr. Pitt's discontents, has been very ill with the cousinhood. In the grief of his heart he thought of resigning his place; but, *somehow or other*, stumbled upon a negotiation for introducing the duke of Bedford into the ministry again, to balance the loss of Mr. Pitt. Whatever persuaded him, he thought this treaty so sure of success, that he lost no time to be the agent of it himself; and whether commissioned or non-commissioned, as both he and the duke of N. say, he carried *carte blanche* to the duke of Bedford, who bounced like a rocket, frightened away poor sir George, and sent for Mr. Pitt to notify the overture. Pitt and the Grenvilles are outrageous; the duke of N. disclaims his ambassador, and every body laughs. Sir George came hither yesterday, to *expectorate* with me, as he called it. Think how I pricked up my ears, as high as king Midas, to hear a Lyttelton vent his grievances against a Pitt and Grenvilles! Lord Temple has named sir George the *apostolic nuntio*; and George Selwyn says, "that he will certainly be invited by miss A. among the foreign ministers." These are greater storms than perhaps you expected yet: they have

occasioned mighty bustle, and whisper, and speculation: but you see

Pulveris exigui jactu composta quiescunt!

You will be diverted with a collateral incident. * * * met Dick Edgecumbe, and asked him with great importance if he knew whether Mr. Pitt was out. Edgecumbe, who thinks nothing important that is not to be decided by dice, and who consequently had never once thought of Pitt's political state, replied, "Yes."—"Ay! how do you know?"—"Why, I called at his door just now, and his porter told me so." Another political event is, that lord E. comes into place; he is to succeed lord Fitzwalter, who is to have lord Grantham's pension, who is dead immensely rich —I think this is the last of the old opposition of any name except sir John Bernard—If you have curiosity about the Ohio, you must write to France: there I believe they know something about it: here it was totally forgot, till last night, when an express arrived with an account of the loss of one of the transports off Falmouth, with eight officers and sixty men on board.

My lady T. has been dying, and was wofully frightened, and *took* prayers; but she is recovered now, even of her repentance. You will not be undiverted to hear that the mob of Sudbury have literally sent a *card* to the mob of Bury, to offer

their assistance at a contested election there: I hope to be able to tell you in my next that Mrs. Holman has sent cards to both mobs for her assembly.[1]

The shrubs shall be sent, but you must stay till the holidays; I shall not have time to go to Strawberry sooner. I have received your second letter, dated November 22d, about the Gothic paper. I hope you will by this time have got mine, to dissuade you from that thought. If you insist upon it, I will send the paper: I have told you what I think, and will therefore say no more on that head; but I will transcribe a passage which I found t'other day in Petronius, and thought not unapplicable to you: "*Omnium herbarum succos Democritus expressit; et ne lapidum virgultorumque vis lateret, ætatem inter experimenta consumpsit.*" I hope Democritus could not draw charmingly, when he threw away his time in extracting tints from flints and twigs!

I can't conclude my letter without telling you what an escape I had at the sale of Dr. Meade's

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[1] Of this lady, Mr. Walpole, in a letter to another correspondent, gives the following account: "You would be diverted with a Mrs. Holman, whose passion is keeping an assembly and inviting literally every body to it. She goes to the drawing-room to watch for sneezes, whips out a curtsey, and then sends next morning to know how your cold does, and desire your company on Thursday."

library, which goes extremely dear. In the catalogue I saw Winstanley's views of Audley-inn, which I concluded was, as it really was, a thin dirty folio worth about fifteen shillings. As I thought it might be scarce, it might run to two or three guineas: however, I bid Graham *certainly* buy it for me. He came the next morning in a great fright, said he did not know whether he had done very right or very wrong, that he had gone as far as *nine-and-forty guineas*—I started in such a fright! Another bookseller had luckily had as unlimited a commission, and bid fifty—when my Graham begged it might be adjourned, till they could consult their principals. I think I shall never give an unbounded commission again, even for views of *Les Rochers!*[2] Adieu! Am I ever to see any more of your *hand-drawing?* Adieu!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, December 24, 1754.

My dear Sir,

I received your packet of December 6th, last night, but intending to come hither for a few days, had unluckily sent away by the coach in

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[2] Madame de Sévigné's seat in Bretagne.

the morning a parcel of things for you; you must therefore wait till another bundle sets out, for the new letters of madame Sevigné. Heaven forbid that I should have said they were bad! I only meant that they were full of family details, and mortal distempers, to which the most immortal of us are subject; and I was sorry that the profane should ever know that my divinity was ever troubled with a sore leg, or the want of money; though indeed the latter defeats Bussy's ill-natured accusation of avarice; and her tearing herself from her daughter, then at Paris, to go and save money in Bretagne to pay her debts, is a perfection of virtue which completes her amiable character. My lady Hervey has made me most happy, by bringing me from Paris an admirable copy of the very portrait that was madame de Simiane's: I am going to build an altar for it, under the title of *Notre Dame des Rochers!*

Well! but you will want to know the contents of the parcel that is set out. It contains another parcel, which contains I don't know what; but Mr. C * * * sent it, and desired I would transmit it to you. There are Ray's Proverbs in two volumes interleaved; a few seeds, mislaid when I sent the last; a very indifferent new tragedy, called Barbarossa, now running, the author[1] un-

[1] It was written by Dr. Browne.

known, but believed to be Garrick himself: there is not one word of Barbarossa's real story, but almost the individual history of Merope; not one new thought, and, which is the next material want, but one line of perfect nonsense;

And rain down transports in the shape of sorrow.

To complete it, the manners are so ill observed, that a Mahometan princess royal is at full liberty to visit her lover in Newgate, like the banker's daughter in George Barnwell. I have added four more *Worlds*,[2] the second of which will, I think, redeem my lord Chesterfield's character with you for wit, except in the two stories, which are very flat: I mean those of two misspelt letters. In the last World,[3] besides the hand, you will find a story of your acquaintance: *Boncœur* means Norborne Berkeley, whose horse sinking up to his middle in Woburn-park, he would not allow that it was any thing more than a little damp. The last story of a highwayman happened almost literally to Mrs. Cavendish.

For news, I think I have none to tell you. Mr. Pitt is gone to the Bath, and Mr. Fox to Newcastle-house; and every body else into the coun-

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[2] Numbers 92, 98, 100, and 101 of the third volume of that periodical paper.

[3] Number 103 by Mr. Walpole.

try for the holidays. When lord Bath was told of the first determination of turning out Pitt, and letting Fox remain, he said, it put him in mind of a story of the gunpowder plot. The lord chamberlain was sent to examine the vaults under the parliament-house, and, returning with his report, said, he had found five-and-twenty barrels of gunpowder; that he had removed ten of them, and hoped the other fifteen would do no harm—— Was ever any thing so well and so just?

The Russian ambassador is to give a masquerade for the birth of the little great prince:[4] the king lends him Somerset-house: he wanted to borrow the palace over against me, and sent to ask it of the cardinal-nephew,[5] who replied, "Not for half Russia."

The new madness is Oratorys. Macklin has set up one, under the title of the The British Inquisition; Foote another, against him; and a third man has advertised another to-day. I have not heard enough in their favour to tempt me to them: nor do I in the world know enough to compose another paragraph. I am here quite alone; Mr. Chute is setting out for his Vine; but in a day or two I expect Mr. Williams,[6] George

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[4] The czar, Paul I.

[5] Henry earl of Lincoln, nephew to the duke of Newcastle, to whose title he succeeded.

[6] George James Williams, esq.

Selwyn, and Dick Edgecumbe. You will allow that when I do admit any body within my cloister, I choose them well. My present occupation is putting up my books; and thanks to arches, and pinnacles, and pierced columns, I shall not appear scantily provided! Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Jan. 7, 1755.

I IMAGINED by your letter the colonel was in town, and was shocked at not having been to wait on him; upon inquiry, I find he is not; and now, can conceive how he came to tell you, that the town has been entertained with a paper of mine; I send it you, to show you that this is one of the many fabulous histories, which have been spread in such quantities, and without foundation.

I shall take care of your letter to Mr. Bentley. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, or I know he would, as I do, beg his compliments to miss Montagu. You do not wish me joy on the approaching nuptials of Mr. Harris and our miss Anne. He is so amorous, that whenever he sits by her, (and he cannot stand by her) my lady Townshend, by a very happy expression, says, *he is always setting his dress.* Have you heard of a countess Cham-

felt, a Bohemian, rich and hideous, who is arrived here, and is under the protection of lady Caroline Petersham? She has a great facility at languages, and has already learned, *d—n you, and kiss me;* I beg her pardon, I believe she never uses the former, but upon miscarriage of the latter: in short, as Doddington says, she has had the honour of performing at **most courts in Europe. Adieu!**

Yours ever.

To **RICHARD** BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, January 9, 1755.

I USED to say that one could not go out of London for two days, without finding at one's return that something very extraordinary had happened; but of late the climate had lost its propensity to odd accidents. Madness be praised, we are a little restored to the want of our senses! I have been twice this Christmas at Strawberry-hill for a few days, and at each return have been not a little surprised: the first time, at the very unexpected death of my lord Albemarle, who was taken ill at Paris, going home from supper, and expired in a few hours; and last week at the far more extraordinary death of ****. He himself, with all his judgment in bets, I think would have betted any man in England against himself for self-mur-

der: yet after having been supposed the sharpest genius of his time, he, by all that appears, shot himself on the distress of his circumstances; an apoplectic disposition I believe concurring, either to lower his spirits, or to alarm them. Ever since miss **** lived with him, either from liking her himself, as some think, or to tempt her to marry his Lilliputian figure, he has squandered vast sums at ****, and in living. He lost twelve hundred a-year by lord Albemarle's death, and four by lord Gage's, the same day. He asked immediately for the government of Virginia or the Fox-hounds, and pressed for an answer with an eagerness that surprised the duke of Newcastle, who never had a notion of pinning down the relief of his own or any other man's wants to a day. Yet that seems to have been the case of ****, who determined to throw the die of life or death, Tuesday was se'nnight, on the answer he was to receive from court; which did not prove favourable. He consulted indirectly, and at last pretty directly, several people on the easiest method of finishing life; and seems to have thought that he had been too explicit; for he invited company to dinner for the day after his death, and ordered a supper at White's, where he supped too the night before. He played at whisk till one in the morning; it was new year's morning: lord Robert Bertie drank to him a happy new year; he clapped his hand strangely to his eyes! In the morning

he had a lawyer and three witnesses, and executed his will, which he made them read twice over, paragraph by paragraph: and then asking the lawyer, if that will would stand good, though a man were to shoot himself? and being assured it would; he said, "*Pray stay while I step into next room;*"—went into next room, and shot himself. He clapped the pistol so close to his head, that they heard no report. The housekeeper heard him fall, and, thinking he had a fit, ran up with drops, and found his skull and brains shot about the room!— You will be charmed with the friendship and generosity of sir ****. **** a little time since opened his circumstances to him. Sir **** said, "****, if it will be of any service to you, you shall see what I have done for you;" pulled out his will, and read it, where he had left him a vast legacy. The beauty of this action is heightened by sir ****'s life not being worth a year's purchase. I own I feel for the distress this man must have felt, before he decided on so desperate an action. I knew him but little; but he was good-natured and agreeable enough, and had the most compendious understanding I ever knew. He had affected a finesse in money matters beyond what he deserved, and aimed at reducing even natural affections to a kind of calculations like Demoivre's. He was asked, soon after his daughter's marriage, if she was with child:—He replied, "Upon my word, I don't know; I have

no bet upon it." This and poor ****'s self-murder have brought to light another, which happening in France, had been sunk; *****'s. I can tell you that the ancient and worshipful company of lovers are under a great dilemma, upon a husband and a gamester killing themselves: I don't know whether they will not apply to parliament for an exclusive charter for self-murder.

On the occasion of ****'s story, I heard another more extraordinary. If a man insures his life, this killing himself vacates the bargain. This (as in England almost every thing begets a contradiction) has produced an office for insuring in spite of self-murder; but not beyond three hundred pounds. I suppose voluntary deaths were not then the *bon-ton* of people in higher life. A man went and insured his life, securing this privilege of a *free-dying* Englishman. He carried the insurers to dine at a tavern, where they met several other persons. After dinner he said to the life-and-death-brokers, "Gentlemen, it is fit that you should be acquainted with the company: these honest men are tradesmen, to whom I was in debt, without any means of paying, but by your assistance; and now I am your humble servant!" He pulled out a pistol and shot himself. Did you ever hear of such a mixture of honesty and knavery?

Lord Rochford is to succeed as groom of the

stole. The duke of Marlborough is privy-seal, in the room of lord Gower, who is dead; and the duke of Rutland is lord steward. Lord Albemarle's other offices and honours are still *in petto*. When the king first saw this lord Albemarle, he said, "Your father had a great many good qualities, but he was a sieve!"—It is the last receiver into which I should have thought his majesty would have poured gold! You will be pleased with the monarch's politesse. Sir John Bland and Offley made interest to play at twelfth-night, and succeeded—not at play, for they lost 1400*l.* and 1200*l.* As it is not usual for people of no higher rank to play, the king thought they would be bashful about it, and took particular care to do the honours of his house to them, set only to them, and spoke to them at his levee next morning.

You love new nostrums and inventions: there is discovered a method of inoculating the cattle for the distemper—it succeeds so well that they are not even marked. How we advance rapidly in discoveries, and in applying every thing to every thing! Here is another secret, that will better answer your purpose, and I hope mine too. They found out lately at the duke of Argyle's, that any kind of ink may be made of privet: it becomes green ink by mixing salt of tartar. I don't know the process; but I am promised it by Campbell, who told me of it t'other day, when I

carried him the true genealogy of the Bentleys, which he assured me shall be inserted in the next edition of the Biographia.

There sets out to-morrow morning, by the Southampton waggon, such a cargo of trees for you, that a detachment of Kentishmen would be furnished against an invasion if they were to unroll the bundle. I write to Mr. S**** to recommend great care of them. Observe how I answer your demands: are you as punctual? The forests in your landscapes do not thrive like those in your letters. Here is a letter from G. Montagu; and then I think I may bid you good-night!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, Feb. 8, 1755.

My dear Sir,

By the waggon on Thursday there set out for Southampton, a lady whom you must call *Phillis*, but whom George Montagu and the Gods would name *Speckle-belly*. Peter begged her for me, that is for you, that is, for captain Dumaresque, after he had been asked three guineas for another. I hope she will not be poisoned with salt-water,

like the poor Poyangers.[1] If she should, you will at least observe, that your commissions are not still-born with me, as mine are with you. I *draw*[2] a spotted dog the moment you desire it.

George Montagu has intercepted the description I promised you of the Russian masquerade: he wrote to beg it, and I cannot transcribe from myself. In few words, there were all the beauties, and all the diamonds, and not a few of the uglies of London. The duke,[3] like Osman the third, seemed in the centre of his new seraglio, and I believe my lady and I thought that my lord * * * * was the chief eunuch. My lady Coventry was dressed in a great style, and looked better than ever. Lady Betty Spencer, like Rubens's wife (not the common one with the hat), had all the bloom and bashfulness and wildness of youth, with all the countenance of all the former Marlboroughs. Lord Delawar was an excellent mask, from a picture at Kensington of queen Elizabeth's porter. Lady Caroline Petersham, powdered with diamonds and crescents for a Turkish slave, was still extremely handsome. The hazard was

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[1] Mr. Walpole having called his gold fish-pond *Poyang*, calls the gold-fish *Poyangers*.

[2] Alluding to Mr. Bentley's dilatoriness in exercising his pencil at the request of Mr. Walpole.

[3] William, duke of Cumberland.

excessively deep, to the astonishment of some Frenchmen of quality who are here, and who I believe, from what they saw that night, will not write to their court to dissuade their armaments, on its not being worth their while to attack so beggarly a nation. Our fleet is as little despicable; but though the preparations on both sides are so great, I believe the storm will blow over. They insist on our immediately sending an ambassador to Paris; and to my great satisfaction, my cousin and friend lord Hertford is to be the man. This is still an entire secret here, but will be known before you receive this.

The weather is very bitter, and keeps me from Strawberry. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, Feb. 23, 1755.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOUR *Argosie* is arrived safe; thank you for shells, trees, cones; but above all, thank you for the landscape. As it is your first attempt in oils, and has succeeded so much beyond my expectation (and being against my advice too, you may believe the sincerity of my praises), I must indulge my *Vasarihood*, and write a dissertation

upon it. You have united and mellowed your colours, in a manner to make it look like an old picure; yet there is something in the tone of it, that is not quite right. Mr. Chute thinks that you should have exerted more of your force in tipping with light the edges on which the sun breaks: my own opinion is, that the result of the whole is not natural, by your having joined a Claude Lorrain summer sky to a wintry sea, which you have drawn from the life. The water breaks finely, but the distant hills are too strong, and the outlines much too hard. The greatest fault is the trees (not apt to be your stumbling-block): they are not of a natural green, have no particular resemblance, and are out of all proportion too large for the figures. Mend these errors, and work away in oil. I am impatient to see some Gothic ruins of your painting. This leads me naturally to thank you for the sweet little *culde-lampe* to the entail: it is equal to any thing you have done in perspective and for taste; but the boy is too large.

For the block of granite I shall certainly think a louis well bestowed—provided I do but get the block, and that you are sure it will be equal to the sample you sent me. My room remains in want of a table; and as it will take so much time to polish it, I do wish you would be a little expeditious in sending it.

I have but frippery-news to tell you; no poli-

ties; for the rudiments of a war, that is not to be a war, are not worth detailing. In short, we have acted with spirit, have got ready 30 ships of the line, and conclude that the French will not care to examine whether they are well manned or not. The house of commons *bears* nothing but elections; the Oxfordshire till seven at night three times a week: we have passed ten evenings on the Colchester election, and last Monday sat upon it till near two in the morning. Whoever stands a contested election, and pays for his seat, and attends the first session, surely buys the other six very dear!

The great event is the catastrophe of sir ****, who has *flirted* away his whole fortune at hazard. He t'other night exceeded what was lost by the late duke of Bedford, having at one period of the night (though he recovered the greatest part of it) lost two-and-thirty thousand pounds. The citizens put on their double-channeled pumps and trudge to St. James's-street, in expectation of seeing judgments executed on White's — angels with flaming swords, and devils flying away with dice-boxes, like the prints in Sadeler's Hermits. Sir ***** lost this immense sum to a captain *****, who at present has nothing but a few debts and his commission.

Garrick has produced a detestable English opera, which is crowded by all true lovers of their country. To mark the opposition to Italian

operas, it is sung by some cast singers, two Italians, and a French girl, and the chapel boys; and to regale us with sense, it is Shakespeare's Midsummer-Night's Dream, which is forty times more nonsensical than the worst translation of any Italian opera-books —— But such sense and such harmony are irresistible!

I am at present confined with a cold, which I caught by going to a fire in the middle of the night, and in the middle of the snow, two days ago. About five in the morning Harry waked me with a candle in his hand, and cried, "Pray, your honour, don't be frightened!" "No, Harry, I am not; but what is it that I am not to be frightened at?" "There is a great fire here in St. James's-street."—I rose, and indeed thought all St. James's-street was on fire, but it proved in Bury-street. However, you know I can't resist going to a fire; for it is certainly the only horrid sight that is fine. I slipped on my slippers, and an embroidered suit that hung on the chair, and ran to Bury-street, and stepped into a pipe that was broken up for water — It would have made a picture — the horror of the flames, the snow, the day breaking with difficulty through so foul a night, and my figure, party per *pale*, mud and gold. It put me in mind of lady Margaret Herbert's providence, who asked somebody for a *pretty* pattern for a night-cap. Lord, said they, what signifies the pattern of a night-cap?—"Oh,

child," said she, "but you know, in case of fire." There were two houses burnt, and a poor maid; an officer jumped out of window, and is much hurt, and two young beauties were conveyed out the same way in their shifts. There have been two more great fires. Alderman Belchier's house at Epsom, that belonged to the prince, is burnt, and Beckford's fine house in the country, with pictures and furniture to a great value. He says, "Oh! I have an odd fifty thousand pounds in a drawer: I will build it up again: it won't be above a thousand pounds a-piece difference to my thirty children." Adieu!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, March 6, 1755.

My dear Sir,

I have to thank you for two letters and a picture. I hope my thanks will have a more prosperous journey than my own letters have had of late. You say you have received none since January 9th. I have written three since that. I take care, in conjunction with the times, to make them harmless enough for the post. Whatever secrets I may have (and you know I have no propensity to mystery) will keep very well till I have the

happiness of seeing you, though that date should be farther off than I hope. As I mean my letters should relieve some of your anxious or dull minutes, I will tempt no post-masters or secretaries to retard them.

The state of affairs is much altered since my last epistle that persuaded you of the distance of a war. So haughty and so ravenous an answer came from France, that my lord Hertford does not go. As a *little* islander, you may be very easy: Jersey is not prey for such fleets as are likely to encounter in the channel in April. You must tremble in your *Bigendian* capacity, if you mean to figure as a good citizen. I sympathize with you extremely in the interruption it will give to our correspondence. You, in an inactive little spot, cannot wish more impatiently for every post that has the probability of a letter, than I, in all the turbulence of London, do constantly, never-failingly, for letters from you. Yet by my busy, hurried, amused, irregular way of life, you would not imagine that I had much time to care for my friends. You know how late I used to rise: it is worse and worse: I stay late at debates and committees; for, with all our tranquillity and my indifference, I think I am never out of the house of commons: from thence, it is the fashion of the winter to go to vast assemblies, which are followed by vast suppers, and those by balls. Last week I was from two at noon till ten at night at the

house: I came home, dined, new dressed myself entirely, went to a ball at lord Holderness's, and staid till five in the morning. What an abominable young creature! But why may not I be so? Old Haslang dances at sixty-five; my lady Rochford without stays, and her husband the new groom of the stole, dance. In short, when secretaries of state, cabinet counsellors, foreign ministers, dance like the universal ballet in the Rehearsal, why should not I — see them? In short, the true definition of me is, that I am a dancing senator — Not that I do dance, or do any thing by being a senator: but I go to balls, and to the house of commons — to look on: and you will believe me when I tell you, that I really think the former the more serious occupation of the two; at least the performers are most in earnest. What men say to women, is at least as sincere as what they say to their country. If perjury can give the devil a right to the souls of men, he has titles by as many ways as my lord **** is descended from Edward the third.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, March 27, 1755.

Your chimney[1] is come, but not to honour: the cariatides are fine and free, but the rest is heavy: lord Strafford is not at all struck with it, and thinks it old-fashioned: it certainly tastes of Inigo Jones. Your myrtles I have seen in their pots, and they are magnificent, but I fear very sickly. In return I send you a library. You will receive some time or other, or the French for you, the following books: a fourth volume of Dodsley's Collection of Poems, the worst tome of the four; three volumes of Worlds; Fielding's Travels, or rather an account how his dropsy was treated and teased by an inn-keeper's wife in the Isle of Wight; the new Letters of madame de Sevigné; and Hume's History of Great Britain; a book which, though more decried than ever book was, and certainly with faults, I cannot help liking much. It is called Jacobite — but in my opinion is only not *George-abite*: where others abuse the Stuarts, he laughs at them: I am sure he does not spare their ministers. Harding, who has the History of England at the ends of his parliament

[1] A design for a chimney-piece, which, at Mr. Walpole's desire, Mr. Bentley had made for lord Strafford.

fingers, says, that the Journals will contradict most of his facts. If it is so, I am sorry; for his style, which is the best we have in history, and his manner, imitated from Voltaire, are very pleasing. He has showed very clearly that we ought to quarrel originally with queen Elizabeth's tyranny for most of the errors of Charles the first. As long as he is willing to sacrifice some royal head, I would not much dispute with him which it should be. I incline every day to lenity, as I see more and more that it is being very partial to think worse of some men than of others. If I was a king myself, I dare say I should cease to love a republic. My lady ***** desired me, t'other day, to give her a motto for a ruby ring, which had been given by a handsome woman of quality to a fine man: he gave it to his mistress, she to lord *****, he to my lady; who, I think, does not deny that it has not yet finished its travels. I excused myself for some time, on the difficulty of reducing such a history to a poesy — at last I proposed this:

This was given by woman to man—and by man to woman.

Are you most impatient to hear of a French war, or the event of the Mitchell election? If the former is uppermost in your thoughts, I can tell you, you are very unfashionable. The whigs and tories in Rome, Athens, and Jerusalem, never forgot national points with more zeal, to attend

to private faction, than we have lately. After triumphs repeated in the committee, lord Sandwich and Mr. Fox were beaten largely on the report. It was a most extraordinary day! The tories, who could not trust one another for two hours, had their last consult at the Horn Tavern just before the report, and all but nine or ten voted in a body (with the duke of Newcastle) against agreeing to it: then sir John Philipps, one of them, moved for a void election, but was deserted by most of his clan. We now begin to turn our hands to foreign war. In the rebellion, the ministry was so unsettled, that nobody seemed to care who was king. Power is now so established, that I must do the engrossers the justice to say, that they seem to be determined that *their own king* shall continue so. Our fleet is great and well manned; we are raising men and money, and messages have been sent to both houses from St. James's, which have been answered by very zealous *cards*. In the mean time, sturdy mandates are arrived from France; however, with a codicil of moderation, and power to Mirepoix still to treat. He was told briskly—"Your terms must come speedily; the fleets will sail very quickly; war cannot then be avoided."

I have passed five entire days lately at doctor Meade's sale, where, however, I bought very little: as extravagantly as he paid for every thing, his name has even resold them with interest.

Lord Rockingham gave two hundred and thirty guineas for the Antinous — the dearest bust that, I believe, was ever sold; yet the nose and chin were repaired, and very ill. Lord Exeter bought the Homer for one hundred and thirty. I must tell you a piece of fortune: I supped the first night of the sale at Bedford-house, and found my lord Gower dealing at silver pharaoh to the women. "Oh!" said I laughing, "I laid out six-and-twenty pounds this morning, I will try if I can win it back;" and threw a shilling upon a card: in five minutes I won a 500-leva, which was twenty-five pounds eleven shillings. I have formerly won a 1000-leva, and another 500-leva. — With such luck, shall not I be able to win you back again?

Last Wednesday I gave a feast in form to the H*****s. There was the duke of Grafton, lord and lady Hertford, Mr. Conway, and lady Ailesbury. In short, all the Conways in the world, my lord Orford, and the Churchills. We dined in the drawing-room below stairs, amidst the Eagle, Vespasian, &c. You never saw so Roman a banquet; but with all my virtù, the bridegroom seemed the most venerable piece of antiquity. Good-night! The books go to Southampton on Monday.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, April 13, 1755.

If I did not think that you would expect to hear often from me at so critical a season, I should certainly not write to you to-night: I am here alone, out of spirits, and not well. In short, I have depended too much upon my constitution being like

Grass, that escapes the scythe by being low;

and having nothing of the oak in the sturdiness of my stature, I imagined that my mortality would remain pliant as long as I pleased. But I have taken so little care of myself this winter, and kept such bad hours, that I have brought a slow fever upon my nights, and am worn to a skeleton: Bethel has plump cheeks to mine. However, as it would be unpleasant to die just at the beginning of a war, I am taking exercise and air, and much sleep, and intend to see Troy taken. The prospect thickens: there are certainly above twelve thousand men at the isle of Rhè; some say twenty thousand. An express was yesterday dispatched to Ireland, where it is supposed the storm will burst; but unless our fleet can disappoint the embarkation, I don't see what service the notification can do: we have quite disgar-

nished that kingdom of troops; and if they once land, ten thousand men may walk from one end of the island to the other. It begins to be thought that the king will not go abroad: that he cannot, every body has long thought. You will be entertained with a prophecy which my lord Chesterfield has found in the 35th chapter of Ezekiel, which clearly promises us victory over the French, and expressly relates to this war, as it mentions the two countries (Nova Scotia and Acadia) which are the point in dispute. You will have no difficulty in allowing that *mounseer* is typical enough of France: except Cyrus, who is the only heathen prince mentioned by his right name, and that before he had any name, I know no power so expressly described.

2. Son of man, set thy face against *Mount Seir*, and prophesy against it.

3. And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, *O Mount Seir*, I am against thee; and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate.

4. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, &c.

10. Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it, &c.

I am disposed to put great trust in this prediction; for I know few things more in our favour. You will ask me naturally, what is to become of

you? Are you to be left to all the chance of war, the uncertainty of pacquets, the difficulty of remittance, the increase of prices? — My dear sir, do you take me for a prime minister, who acquaints the *states* that they are in damned danger, when it is about a day too late? Or shall I order my *chancellor* to assure you that this is numerically the very day on which it is fit to give such notification, and that a day sooner or a day later would be improper? — But not to trifle politically with you, your redemption is nearer than you think for, though not complete: the terms a little depend upon yourself. You must send me an account, **strictly and upon** your honour, what your debts are: as there is **no possibility** for the present but of compounding them, I put my friendship upon it, that you answer me sincerely. Should you, upon the hopes of facilitating your return, not deal ingenuously with me, which I will not suspect, it would occasion what I hope will never happen. Some overtures are going to be made to miss * * * *, to ward off impediments from her. In short, though I cannot explain any of the means, your fortune wears another face; and if you send me immediately, upon your honour, a faithful account of what I ask, no time will be **lost to** labour your return, which I wish **so much**, and of which I have said so little lately, as I have had better hopes of it. Don't joke with me upon this head, as you sometimes

do; be explicit, be open in the most unbounded manner, and deal like a man of sense with a heart that deserves you should have no disguises to it. You know me and my style: when I engage earnestly as I do in this business, I can't bear not to be treated in my own way.

Sir Charles Williams is made ambassador to Russia; which concludes all I know. But at such a period, two days may produce much, and I shall not send away my letter till I am in town on Tuesday. Good night!

Thursday, 17th.

All the officers on the Irish establishment are ordered over thither immediately: lord Hartington has offered to go directly,[1] and sets out with Mr. Conway this day se'nnight. The journey to Hanover is positive: what if there should be a crossing-over and figuring-in of kings? I know who don't think all this very serious; so that, if you have a mind to be in great spirits, you may quote lord H*****. He went to visit the duchess of Bedford t'other morning, just after lord Anson had been there and told her his opinion. She asked lord H***** what news? He knew none. "Don't you hear there will be certainly war?" "No, madam: I saw Mr. Nu-

1 As viceroy.

gent yesterday, and he did not tell me any thing of it." She replied, "I have just seen a man who must know, and who thinks it unavoidable." "Nay, madam, perhaps it may: *I don't think a little war would do us any harm.*" Just as if he had said, losing a little blood in spring is very wholesome; or that a little hissing would not do the Mingotti any harm!

I went t'other morning to see the sale of Mr. Pelham's plate, with G. Selwyn — "Lord! says he, how many toads have been eaten off those plates!" Adieu! I flatter myself that this will be a comfortable letter to you: but I must repeat, that I expect a very serious answer, and very sober resolutions. If I treat you like a child, consider you have been so. I know I am in the right — more delicacy would appear kinder, without being so kind. As I wish and intend to restore and establish your happiness, I shall go thoroughly to work. You don't want an apothecary, but a surgeon — but I shall give you over at once, if you are either froward or relapse.

Yours till then.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, April 24, 1755.

I DON'T doubt but you will conclude that this letter, written so soon after my last, comes to notify a great sea-victory, or defeat; or that the French are landed in Ireland, and have taken and fortified Cork; that they have been joined by all the wild Irish, who have proclaimed the pretender, and are charmed with the prospect of being governed by a true descendant of the Mac-na-O's; or that the king of Prussia, like an unnatural nephew, has seized his uncle and Schutz in a post-chaise, and obliged them to hear the rehearsal of a French opera of his own composing—No such thing! If you will be guessing, you will guess wrong—all I mean to tell you is, that thirteen gold-fish, caparisoned in coats of mail, as rich as if mademoiselle Scuderi had invented their armour, embarked last Friday on a secret expedition; which, as Mr. Weekes[1] and the wisest politicians of Twickenham concluded, was designed against the island of Jersey—— but to their consummate mortification, captain Chevalier is detained by a law-suit, and the poor Chinese adventurers are now frying under deck below bridge.

[1] A carpenter at Twickenham, employed by Mr. Walpole.

—In short, if your governor is to have any gold-fish, you must come and manage their transport yourself. Did you receive my last letter? If you did, you will not think it impossible that you should preside at such an embarkation.

The war is quite gone out of fashion, and seems adjourned to America: though I am disappointed, I am not surprised. You know my despair about this eventless age! How pleasant to have lived in times when one could have been sure every week of being able to write such a paragraph as this!—We hear that the *Christians* who were on their voyage for the recovery of the Holy Land, have been massacred in Cyprus by the natives, who were provoked at a rape and murder committed in a church by some young noblemen belonging to the nuntio —— or — Private letters from Rome attribute the death of his holiness to poison, which they pretend was given to him in the sacrament, by the cardinal of St. Cecilia, whose mistress he had debauched.—The same letters add, that this cardinal stands the fairest for succeeding to the papal tiara; though a natural son of the late pope is supported by the whole interest of Arragon and Naples.——Well! since neither the pope nor the most Christian king will play the devil, I must condescend to tell you flippancies of less dignity. There is a young Frenchman here, called monsieur Herault. Lady ***** carried him and his governor to sup with

her and miss ***** at a tavern t'other night. I have long said that the French were relapsed into barbarity, and quite ignorant of the world — You shall judge: in the first place, the young man was bashful: in the next, the governor, so ignorant as not to have heard of women of fashion carrying men to a tavern, thought it incumbent upon him *to do the honours* for his pupil, who was as modest and as much in a state of nature as the ladies themselves, and hazarded some familiarities with lady *****. The consequence was, that the next morning she sent a card to both, to desire they would not come to her ball that evening, to which she had invited them, and to beg the favour of them never to come into her house again. Adieu! I am prodigal of my letters, as I hope not to write you many more.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 4, as they call it, but the weather and the almanack of my feelings affirm it is December.

I WILL answer your questions as well as I can, though I must do it shortly, for I write in a sort of hurry.

Osborn could not find lord Cutts, but I have discovered another, in an auction, for which I

shall bid for you. Mr. Müntz has been at Strawberry these three weeks, tight at work, so your picture is little advanced, but as soon as he returns it shall be finished. I have chosen the marbles for your tomb; but you told me you had agreed on the price, which your steward now says I was to settle. Mr. Bentley still waits the conclusion of the session, before he can come amongst us again: every thing has passed with great secrecy: one would think the devil was afraid of being tried for his life, for he has not even directed madame Bentley to the Old Bailey. Mr. Mann does not mend, but how should he in such weather?

We wait with impatience for news from Minorca. Here is a prince of Nassau Welbourg, who wants to marry princess Caroline of Orange; he is well-looking enough, but a little too tame to cope with such blood. He is established at the duke of Richmond's, with a large train, for two months. He was last night at a great ball at my lady Townshend, whose Audrey will certainly get lord George Lennox. George Selwyn t'other night, seeing lady Euston with lady P******, said, "there's my lady Euston, and my lady *us'd to't.*" Adieu!

Yours ever.

[I enclose you a print of the arms.]

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 6, 1755.

My dear Sir,

Do you get my letters? or do I write only for the entertainment of the clerks of the post-office? I have not heard from you this month! It will be very unlucky, if my last to you has miscarried, as it required an answer, of importance to you, and very necessary to my satisfaction.

I told you of lord P*****'s intended motion. He then repented, and wrote to my lady Yarmouth and Mr. Fox to mediate his pardon. Not contented with his reception, he determined to renew his intention. Sir Cordel Firebrace took it up, and intended to move the same address in the commons, but was prevented by a sudden adjournment. However, the last day but one of the session, lord P***** read his motion, which was a speech. My lord Chesterfield (who of all men living seemed to have no business to defend the duke of Newcastle after much the same sort of ill usage) said the motion was improper, and moved to adjourn. T'other earl said, "Then, pray, my lords, what is to become of my motion?" The house burst out a-laughing: he divided it, but was single. He then advertised his papers as lost. Legge, in his punning style, said, "My lord P***** has had a stroke of an apo-

plexy; he has lost both his speech and motion." It is now printed; but not having succeeded in prose, he is turned poet—you may guess how good!

The Duke[1] is at the head of the regency—you may guess if we are afraid! Both fleets are sailed. The night the king went, there was a magnificent ball and supper at Bedford-house. The duke was there: he was playing at hazard with a great heap of gold before him: somebody said, he looked like the prodigal son and the fatted calf both. In the dessert was a model of Walton-bridge in glass. Yesterday I gave a great breakfast at Strawberry-hill to the Bedford-court. There were the duke and duchess, lord Tavistock and lady Caroline, my lord and lady Gower, lady Caroline Egerton, lady Betty Waldegrave, lady Mary Coke, Mrs. Pitt, Mr. Churchill and lady Mary, Mr. Bap. Leveson, and colonel Sebright. The first thing I asked Harry was, "Does the sun shine?" It did; and Strawberry was all gold, and all green. I am not apt to think people really like it, that is, understand it; but I think the flattery of yesterday was sincere; I judge by the notice the duchess took of your drawings. Oh! how you will think the shades of Strawberry extended! Do you observe the

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[1] Duke of Cumberland

tone of satisfaction with which I say this, as thinking it near? Mrs. Pitt brought her French horns: we placed them in the corner of the wood, and it was delightful. Poyang has great custom: I have lately given count Perron some gold-fish, which he has carried in his post-chaise to Turin: he has already carried some before. The Russian minister has asked me for some too, but I doubt their succeeding there; unless, according to the universality of my system, every thing is to be found out at last, and practised every where.

I have got a new book that will divert you, called *Anecdotes Litteraires:* it is a collection of stories and bons-mots of all the French writers; but so many of their bons-mots are impertinencies, follies, and vanities, that I have blotted out the title, and written *Misères des Sçavants.* It is a triumph for the ignorant. Gray says, very justly, that learning never should be encouraged, it only draws out fools from their obscurity; and you know, I have always thought a running-footman as meritorious a being as a learned man. Why is there more merit in having travelled one's eyes over so many reams of papers, than in having carried one's legs over so many acres of ground? Adieu, my dear sir! Pray don't be taken prisoner to France, just when you are expected at Strawberry!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 13, 1755.

It is very satisfactory to me, to hear that miss Montagu was pleased with the day she passed at Strawberry-hill; but does not it silently reproach you, who will never see it but in winter?—Does she not assure you that there are leaves, and flowers, and verdure? And why will you not believe, that with those additions, it might look pretty, and might make you some small amends for a day or two purloined from Greatworth? I wish you would visit it, when in its beauty, and while it is mine! You will not, I flatter myself, like it so well, when it belongs to the *Intendant* of Twickenham, when a cockle-shell walk is made across the lawn, and every thing without doors is made regular, and every thing *riant* and modern; for this must be its fate! Whether its next master is already on board the Brest fleet, I do not pretend to say; but I scarce think it worth my while to dispose of it by my will, as I have some apprehensions of living to see it granted away *de par le Roy*. My lady Hervey dined there yesterday with the Rochfords. I told her, that as she is just going to France, I was unwilling to let her see it, for if she should like it, she would desire mademoiselle, with whom she lives, to beg it for her. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

May 19.

It is on the stroke of eleven, and I have but time to tell you that the king of Prussia has gained the greatest victory[1] that ever was, except the arch-angel Michael's — king Frederick has only demolished the dragoness. He attacked her army in a strong camp on the 6th; suffered in the beginning of the action much, but took it, with all the tents, baggage, &c. &c. two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, six thousand prisoners, and they say Prague since. The Austrians have not stopped yet; if you see any man scamper by your house, you may venture to lay hold on him, though he should be a Pandour. Marshal Schwerin was killed. Good night.

Yours ever.

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[1] On the banks of the Moldaw near Prague.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, June 10, 1755.

Mr. Müntz[1] is arrived. I am sorry I can by no means give any commendation to the hasty step you took about him. Ten guineas were a great deal too much to advance to him, and must raise expectations in him that will not at all answer. You have entered into no written engagement with him, nor even sent me his receipt for the money. My good sir, is this the sample you give me of the prudence and providence you have learned? I don't love to enter into the particulars of my own affairs; I will only tell you in one word, that they require great management. My endeavours are all employed to serve you; don't, I beg, give me reasons to apprehend that they will be thrown away. It is much in obscurity whether I shall be able to accomplish your re-establishment; but I shall go on with great discouragement, if I cannot promise myself that you will be a very different person after your return. I shall never have it in my power to do twice what I am now doing for you; and I choose to say the worst before-hand, rather than to reprove you for

[1] Mr. Walpole had invited Mr. Müntz from Jersey, and he lived for some time at Strawberry-hill.

indolence and thoughtlessness hereafter, when it may be too late. Excuse my being so serious, but I find it is necessary.

You are not displeased with me, I know, even when I pout: you see I am not quite in good-humour with you, and I don't disguise it; but I have done scolding you for this time. Indeed I might as well continue it; for I have nothing else to talk of but Strawberry, and of that subject you must be well wearied. I believe she alluded to my disposition to *pout*, rather than meant to compliment me, when my lady Townshend said to somebody, t'other day, who told her how well Mrs. Leneve was, and in spirits, "Oh! she must be in spirits: why, she lives with Mr. Walpole, who is spirit of hartshorn!"

Princess Emily has been here:——Liked it? Oh no!—I don't wonder:—I never liked St. James's.—She was so inquisitive and so curious in prying into the very offices and servants' rooms, that her captain Bateman was sensible of it, and begged Catherine not to mention it. He addressed himself well, if he hoped to meet with taciturnity! Catherine immediately ran down to the pond, and whispered to all the reeds, "Lord! that a princess should be such a gossip!"—In short, Strawberry-hill is the puppet-show of the times.

I have lately bought two more portraits of personages in Grammont, Harry Jermyn and Chif-

finch; my Arlington-street is so full of portraits, that I shall scarce find room for Mr. Müntz's works.

Wednesday, 11th.

I was prevented from finishing my letter yesterday, by what do you think? By no less magnificent a circumstance than a deluge. We have had an extraordinary drought, no grass, no leaves, no flowers; not a white rose for the festival of yesterday![2] About four arrived such a flood, that we could not see out of the windows: the whole lawn was a lake, though situated on so high an Ararat: presently it broke through the leads, drowned the pretty blue bed-chamber, passed through ceilings and floors into the little parlour, terrified Harry, and opened all Catherine's water-gates and *speech-gates*.—I had but just time to collect two dogs, a couple of sheep, a pair of bantams, and a brace of gold-fish; for, in the haste of my zeal to imitate my ancestor Noah, I forgot that fish would not easily be drowned. In short, if you chance to spy a little ark with pinnacles sailing towards Jersey, open the sky-light, and you will find some of your acquaintance. You never saw such desolation! A pigeon brings word that Mabland has fared still worse: it never came into my head

[2] The pretender's birth-day.

before, that a rainbow-office for insuring against water might be very necessary. This is a true account of the late deluge.

Witness our hands,

HORACE NOAH.
CATHERINE NOAH, her ⋊ mark.
HENRY SHEM.
LOUIS JAPHET.
PETER HAM, &c.

I was going to seal my letter, and thought I should scarce have any thing more important to tell you than the history of the flood, when a most extraordinary piece of news indeed arrived—nothing less than a new gunpowder-plot—last Monday was to be the fatal day—There was a ball at Kew—Vanneschi and his son, directors of the opera, two English lords and two Scotch lords are in confinement at justice Fielding's.—This is exactly all I know of the matter; and this weighty intelligence is brought by the waterman from my housemaid in Arlington-street, who sent Harry word that the town is in an uproar; and to confirm it, the waterman says he heard the same thing at Hungerford-stairs. I took the liberty to represent to Harry, that the ball at Kew was this day se'nnight for the prince's birth-day; that, as the duke was at it, I imagined the Scotch lords would rather have chosen that day for the execution of their tragedy; that I believed Vanneschi's son

was a child, and that peers are generally confined at the Tower, not at justice Fielding's; besides, that we are much nearer to Kew than Hungerford-stairs are.—But Harry, who has not at all recovered the deluge, is extremely disposed to think Vanneschi very like Guy Fawkes; and is so persuaded that so dreadful a story could *not* be invented, that I have been forced to believe it too: and in the course of our reasoning and guessing, I told him, that though I could not fix upon all four, I was persuaded that the late lord Lovat who was beheaded must be one of the Scotch peers, and lord A.'s son who is not begot, one of the English.—I was afraid he would think I treated so serious a business too ludicrously, if I had hinted at the scene of distressed friendship that would be occasioned by lord H * * *'s examining his intimate Vanneschi. Adieu! my dear sir——Mr. Fox and lady Caroline, and lord and lady Kildare are to dine here to-day; and if they tell Harry or me any more of the plot, you shall know it.

Wednesday night.

Well! now for the plot: thus much is true. A laundry-maid of the duchess of Marlborough, passing by the Cocoa-tree, saw two gentlemen go in there, one of whom dropped a letter; it was directed, *to you*. She opened it. It was very obscure, talked of designs at Kew miscarried, of

new methods to be taken; and as this way of correspondence had been repeated too often, another must be followed; and it told *you* that the next letter to him should be in a bandbox at such a house in the Haymarket. The duchess concluded it related to a gang of street-robbers, and sent it to Fielding. He sent to the house named, and did find a box and a letter, which, though obscure, had treason enough in it. It talked of a design at Kew miscarried; that the opera was now the only place, and consequently the scheme must be deferred till next season, especially as *a certain person* is abroad. For the other great person (the duke), they are sure of him at any time. There was some indirect mention too of gunpowder. Vanneschi and others have been apprehended: but a conclusion was made, that it was a malicious design against the lord high-treasurer of the opera and his administration; and so they have been dismissed. Macnamara,[3] I suppose you Jerseyans know, is returned with his fleet to Brest, leaving the transports sailing to America. Lord Thanet and Mr. Stanley are just gone to Paris, I believe to inquire after the war.

The weather has been very bad for showing Strawberry to the Kildares; we have not been able to stir out of doors: but to make me amends,

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[3] The French admiral.

I have discovered that lady Kildare is a true Sevignist. You know what pleasure I have in any increase of our sect; I thought she grew handsomer than ever as she talked with devotion of *Notre Dame des Rochers*. Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours ever.

P. S. Tell me if you receive this; for in these gunpowder times to be sure the clerks of the post-office are peculiarly alert.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 5, 1755.

You vex me exceedingly. I beg, if it is not too late, that you would not send me these two new quarries of granite; I had rather pay the original price and leave them where they are, than be encumbered with them. My house is already a stone-cutter's shop, nor do I know what to do with what I have got, But this is not what vexes me, but your desiring me to traffic with Carter, and showing me that you are still open to any visionary project! Do you think I can turn broker, and factor, and I don't know what? And at your time of life do you expect to make a fortune by becoming a granite merchant? There must be great demand for a commodity that costs a

guinea a foot, and a month an inch to polish! You send me no drawings, for which you know I should thank you infinitely, and are hunting for every thing that I would thank you for letting alone. In short, my dear sir, I am determined never to be a projector, nor to deal with projects. If you will still pursue them, I must beg you will not only not employ me in them, but not even let me know that you employ any body else. If you will not be content with my plain rational way of serving you, I can do no better; nor can I joke upon it. I can combat any difficulties for your service, but those of your own raising. Not to talk any more crossly, and to prevent, if I can for the future, any more of these expostulations, I must tell you plainly, that with regard to my own circumstances, I generally drive to a penny, and have no money to spare for visions. I do and am doing all I can for you; and let me desire you once for all, not to send me any more persons or things without asking my consent, and staying till you receive it. I cannot help adding to the chapter of complaint * * * *

These, my dear sir, are the imprudent difficulties you draw me into, and which almost discourage me from proceeding in your business. If you anticipate your revenue, even while in Jersey, and build castles in the air before you have repassed the sea, can I expect that you will be a better œconomist either of your fortune or your

prudence here? I beg you will preserve this letter, ungracious as it is, because I hope it will serve to prevent my writing any more such——

Now to Mr. Müntz:—Hitherto he answers all you promised and vowed for him: he is very modest, humble and reasonable; and has seen so much and knows so much of countries and languages, that I am not likely to be soon tired of him. His drawings are very pretty:—he has done two views of Strawberry that please me extremely: his landscape and trees are much better than I expected. His next work is to be a large picture from your Mabland for Mr. Chute, who is much content with him: he goes to the Vine in a fortnight or three weeks. We came from thence the day before yesterday. I have drawn up an *inventionary* of all I propose he should do there; the computation goes a little beyond five thousand pounds; but he does not go half so fast as my impatience demands: he is so reasonable, and will think of dying, and of the gout, and of twenty disagreeable things that one must do and have, that he takes no joy in planting and future views, but distresses all my rapidity of schemes. Last week we were at my sister's at Chaffont in Buckinghamshire, to see what we could make of it; but it wants so much of every thing, and would require so much more than an inventionary of five thousand pounds, that we decided nothing, except that Mr. Chute has designed the prettiest

house in the world for them. We went to see the objects of the neighbourhood, Bulstrode and Latimers. The former is a melancholy monument of Dutch magnificence: however, there is a brave gallery of old pictures, and a chapel with two fine windows of modern painted-glass. The ceiling was formerly decorated with the assumption, or rather *presumption*, of chancellor Jeffries, to whom it belonged; but a very judicious fire hurried him somewhere else. Latimers belongs to Mrs. Cavendish. I have lived there formerly with Mr. Conway, but it is much improved since; yet the river stops short at an hundred yards just under your eye, and the house has undergone Batty Langley-discipline: half the ornaments are of his bastard Gothic, and half of Hallet's mongrel Chinese. I want to write over the doors of most modern edifices, *Repaired and beautified, Langley and Hallet churchwardens.* The great dining-room is hung with the paper of my staircase, but not shaded properly like mine. I was much more charmed lately at a visit I made to the Cardigans at Blackheath. Would you believe that I had never been in Greenwich-park? I never had, and am transported! Even the glories of Richmond and Twickenham hide their diminished rays.—Yet nothing is equal to the fashion of this village: Mr. Müntz says we have more coaches than there are in half France. Mrs. Pritchard has bought Ragman's castle, for which my lord Litchfield

could not agree. We shall be as celebrated as Baiæ or Tivoli; and, if we have not such sonorous names as they boast, we have very famous people: Clive and Pritchard, actresses; Scott and Hudson, painters; my lady Suffolk famous in her time; Mr. H * * *, the impudent lawyer, that Tom Hervey wrote against; Whitehead, the poet —and Cambridge, the every thing. Adieu! my dear sir—I know not one syllable of news.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 17, 1755.

To be sure, war is a dreadful calamity, &c.! But then it is a very comfortable commodity for writing letters and writing history; and as one did not contribute to make it, why there is no harm in being a little amused with looking on: and if one can but keep the pretender on t'other side Derby, and keep Arlington-street and Strawberry-hill from being carried to Paris, I know nobody that would do more to promote peace, or that will bear the want of it with a better grace than myself. If I don't send you an actual declaration of war in this letter, at least you perceive I am the harbinger of it. An account arrived yesterday morning, that Boscawen had missed the French fleet, who are

got into Cape Breton; but two of his captains attacked three of their squadron and have taken two, with scarce any loss. This is the third time one of the French captains has been taken by Boscawen.

Mr. Conway is arrived from Ireland, where the triumphant party are what parties in that situation generally are, unreasonable and presumptuous. They will come into no terms without a stipulation that the primate[1] shall not be in the regency. This is a bitter pill to digest—but must not it be swallowed? Have we heads to manage a French war and an Irish civil war too?

There are little domestic news. If you insist upon some, why, I believe I could persuade somebody or other to hang themselves; but that is scarce an article uncommon enough to send cross the sea. For example, the rich * * *, whose brother died of the small-pox a year ago, and left him 400,000*l.* had a fit of the gout last week, and shot himself. I only begin to be afraid that it should grow as necessary to shoot one's self here, as it is to go into the army in France. Sir Robert Browne has lost his last daughter, to whom he could have given eight thousand pounds a-year. When I tell these riches and madnesses to Mr. Müntz, he stares so, that I sometimes fear he

1 Dr. Stone.

thinks I mean to impose on him. It is cruel to a person who collects the follies of the age for the information of posterity, to have one's veracity doubted: it is the truth of them that makes them worth notice. Charles Townshend marries the great dowager Dalkeith:—his parts and presumption are prodigious. He wanted nothing but independence to let him loose: I propose great entertainment from him; and now, perhaps, the times will admit it! There may be such things again as parties—odd evolutions happen. The ballad I am going to transcribe for you is a very good comment on so common-place a text. My lord Bath, who was brought hither by my lady Hervey's and Billy Bristow's reports of the charms of the place, has made the following stanzas, to the old tune which you remember of Rowe's ballad on Doddington's Mrs. Strawbridge:

I.

Some talk of Gunnersbury,
For Sion some declare;
And some say that with Chiswick-house
No villa can compare;
But all the beaux of Middlesex,
Who know the country well,
Say, that Strawberry-hill, that Strawberry
Doth bear away the bell.

II.

Though Surry boasts its Oatlands,
And Claremont kept so jim;

And though they talk of Southcote's,
'Tis but a dainty whim;
For ask the gallant Bristow,
Who does in taste excel,
If Strawberry-hill, if Strawberry
Don't bear away the bell.

Can there be an odder revolution of things, than that the printer of the Craftsman[2] should live in a house of mine, and that the author of the Craftsman should write a panegyric on a house of mine?

I dined yesterday at Wanstead: many years have passed since I saw it. The disposition of the house and the prospect are better than I expected, and very fine: the garden, which they tell you cost as much as the house, that is, 100,000*l.* (don't tell Mr. Müntz) is wretched; the furniture fine, but totally without taste: such continences and incontinences of Scipio and Alexander, by I don't know whom! such flame-coloured gods and goddesses, by Kent! such family-pieces, by—I believe the late earl himself, for they are as ugly as the children that he really begot! The whole great apartment is of oak, finely carved, unpainted, and has a charming effect. The present earl is

[2] Franklin, who occupied the cottage in the enclosure which Mr. Walpole afterwards called the Flower-garden at Strawberry-hill.—When he bought the ground on which this tenement stood, he allowed Franklin to continue to occupy it during his life.

the most generous creature in the world: in the first chamber I entered he offered me four marble tables that lay in cases about the room: I compounded, after forty refusals of every thing I commended, to bring away only a haunch of venison: I believe he has not had so cheap a visit a good while. I commend myself, as I ought; for, to be sure, there were twenty ebony chairs, and a couch, and a table, and a glass, that would have tried the virtue of a philosopher of double my size! After dinner we dragged a gold-fish-pond for my lady F. and lord S. I could not help telling my lord Tilney, that they would certainly burn the poor fish for the gold, like old lace. There arrived a marquis St. Simon, from Paris, who understands English, and who has seen your book of designs for Gray's Odes: he was much pleased at meeting me, to whom the individual cat belonged—and you may judge whether I was pleased with him. Adieu! my dear sir.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 17, 1755.

HAVING done with building and planting, I have taken to farming; the first fruits of my proficience in that science I offer to you, and have taken the

liberty to send you a couple of cheeses. If you will give yourself the trouble to inquire at Brackley for the coach, which set out this morning, you will receive a box and a roll of paper. The latter does not contain a cheese, only a receipt for making them. We have taken so little of the French fleet, that I fear none of it will come to my share, or I would have sent you part of the spoils. I have nothing more to send you, but a new ballad, which my lord Bath has made on this place; you remember the old burden of it, and the last lines allude to Billy Bristow's having fallen in love with it.[1]

I am a little pleased to send you this, to shew you, that in summer we are a little pretty, though you will never look at us but in our ugliness. My best compliments to miss Montagu, and my service to whatever baronet breakfasts with you on *négus*. Have you heard that poor lady Browne is so unfortunate as to have lost her last daughter; and that Mrs. Barnett is so lucky as to have lost her mother-in-law, and is baroness Dacre of the South? I met the great Cû t'other day, and he asked me if I ever heard from you; that he never did: I told him that I did not neither; did not I say true?

Yours ever.

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[1] See the last letter.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 26, 1755.

WHO would not turn farmer, when their very first essay turns to so good account? Seriously, I am quite pleased with the success of my mystery, and infinitely obliged to you for the kind things you say about my picture. You must thank Mrs. Whetenhall too for her prepossession about my cheeses; I fear a real manufacturer of milk at Strawberry-hill, would not have answered quite so well as our old commodities of paint and copper-plates.

I am happy for the recovery of miss Montagu, and the tranquillity you must feel after so terrible a season of apprehension. Make my compliments to her, and if you can be honest on so tender a topic, tell her, that she will always be in danger, while you shut her up in Northamptonshire, and that with her delicate constitution she ought to live nearer friends and help; and I know of no spot so healthy or convenient for both, as the county of Twicks.

Charles Townshend[1] is to be married next month; as the lady had a very bad husband be-

[1] Son of viscount Townshend, married lady Dalkeith, daughter of the duke of Argyll.

fore, she has chosen prudently, and has settled herself in a family of the best sort of people in the world, who will think of nothing but making her happy. I don't know whether the bride-groom won't be afraid of getting her any more children, lest it should prejudice those she has already! they are a wonderful set of people for goodnatured considerations!

You know, to be sure, that Mr. Humberston is dead, and your neighbouring Brackley likely to return under the dominion of its old masters. Lady Dysart[2] is dead too.

Mr. Chute is at the Vine. Your poor Cliquetis is still a banished man. I have a scheme for bringing him back, but can get Mrs. Tisiphone into no kind of terms, and without tying her up from running him into new debts, it is in vain to recover him.

I believe the declaration of war has been stopped at the Custom-house, for one hears nothing of it. You see I am very paragraphical, and in reality have nothing to say; so good night!

Yours ever.

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[2] Daughter of the earl of Granville.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, August 4, 1755, between 11 and 12 at night.

I CAME from London to-day, and am just come from supping at Mrs. Clive's, to write to you by the fire-side. We have been exceedingly troubled for some time with St. Swithin's diabetes, and have not a dry thread in any walk about us. I am not apt to complain of this malady, nor do I: it keeps us green at present, and will make our shades very thick, against we are fourscore, and fit to enjoy them. I brought with me your two letters of July 30 and August 1; a sight I have not seen a long time!—But, my dear sir, you have been hurt at my late letters. Do let me say thus much in excuse for myself. You know how much I value, and what real and great satisfaction I have in your drawings. Instead of pleasing me with so little trouble to yourself, do you think it was no mortification to receive every thing but your drawings? to find you full of projects, and, I will not say, with some imprudences?—But I have done on this subject—my friendship will always be the same for you; it will only act with more or less cheerfulness, as you use your common sense or your disposition to chimerical schemes and carelessness. To give you all the

present satisfaction in my power, I will tell you
* * * * * *

I think your good-nature means to reproach me with having dropped any hint of finding amusement in contemplating a war. When one would not do any thing to promote it, when one would do any thing to put a period to it, when one is too insignificant to contribute to either, I must own I see no blame in thinking an active age more agreeable to live in, than a soporific one.—But, my dear sir, I must adopt *your* patriotism—Is not it laudable to be revived with the revival of British glory? Can I be an indifferent spectator of the triumphs of my country? Can I help feeling a tattoo at my heart, when the duke of Newcastle makes as great a figure in history as Burleigh or Godolphin—nay, as queen Bess herself?—She gained no battles in person; she was only the actuating genius. You seem to have heard of a proclamation of war, of which we have not heard; and not to have come to the knowledge of taking of Beau Sejour by colonel Monckton. In short, the French and we seem to have crossed over and figured in, in politics. Mirepoix complained grievously that the duke of N. had over-reached him—But he is to be forgiven in so good a cause! It is the first person he ever deceived!—I am preparing a new folio for heads of the heroes that are to bloom in mezzotinto from this war. At present my chief study is West-Indian history.

You would not think me very ill-natured if you knew all I feel at the cruelty and villainy of European settlers—But this very morning I found that part of the purchase of Maryland from the savage proprietors (for *we* do not massacre, *we* are such good Christians as only to cheat) was a quantity of vermilion and a parcel of Jews-harps!

Indeed, if I pleased, I might have another study; it is my fault if I am not a commentator and a corrector of the press. The marquis de St. Simon, whom I mentioned to you, at a very first visit proposed to me to look over a translation he had made of The Tale of a Tub—the proposal was soon followed by a folio, and a letter of three sides, to press me seriously to revise it. You shall judge of my scholar's competence. He translates *L'Estrange*, *Dryden* and others, *l'etrange*, *Dryden*, &c. Then in the description of the taylor as an idol, and his goose as the symbol; he says in a note, that the *goose* means the dove, and is a concealed satire on the Holy Ghost.—It put me in mind of the Dane, who talking of orders to a Frenchman, said—"*Notre St. esprit est un elephant.*"

Don't think, because I prefer your drawings to every thing in the world, that I am such a churl as to refuse Mrs. B's partridges: I shall thank her very much for them. You must excuse me, if I am vain enough to be so convinced of my own taste, that all the neglect that has been thrown

upon your designs cannot make me think I have over-valued them. I must think that the states of Jersey who execute your town-house, have much more judgment than all our connoisseurs. When I every day see Greek, and Roman, and Italian, and Chinese, and Gothic architecture embroidered and inlaid upon one another, or called by each other's names, I can't help thinking that the grace and simplicity and truth of your taste, in whichever you undertake, is real taste. I go farther: I wish you would know in what you excel, and not be hunting after twenty things unworthy your genius. If flattery is my turn, believe this to be so.

Mr. Müntz is at the Vine, and has been some time. I want to know more of this history of the German: I do assure you, that I like both his painting and behaviour—but if any history of any kind is to accompany him, I shall be most willing to part with him. However I may divert myself as a spectator of broils, believe me I am thoroughly sick of having any thing to do in any. Those in a neighbouring island are likely to subside—and, contrary to custom, the *priest*[1] himself is to be the *sacrifice*.

I have contracted a sort of intimacy with Garrick, who is my neighbour. He affects to study

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[1] The primate of Ireland.

my taste: I lay it all upon you—he admires you. He is building a grateful temple to Shakespeare: I offered him this motto: *Quod spiro et placeo, si placeo tuum est.* Don't be surprised if you should hear of me as a gentleman coming upon the stage next winter for my diversion.—The truth is, I make the most of this acquaintance to protect my poor neighbour at *Clivden*—you understand the conundrum, *Clive's den.*

Adieu, my dear sir! Need I repeat assurances? If I need, believe that nothing that can tend to your recovery has been or shall be neglected by me. You may trust me to the utmost of my power—beyond that, what can I do? Once more, adieu!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, August 16, 1755.

My dear Sir,

Though I wrote to you so lately, and have certainly nothing new to tell you, I can't help scribbling a line to you to-night, as I am going to Mr. Rigby's for a week or ten days, and must thank you first for the three pictures. One of them charms me, the Mount Orgueil, which is absolutely fine; the sea, and shadow upon it, are masterly. The other

two I don't, at least won't, take for finished. If you please, Elizabeth Castle shall be Mr. Müntz's performance: indeed I see nothing of you in it. I do reconnoitre you in the Hercules and Nessus; but in both, your colours are dirty, carelessly dirty: in your distant hills you are improved, and not hard. The figures are too large—I don't mean in the Elizabeth Castle, for there they are neat; but the centaur, though he dies as well as Garrick can, is outrageous. Hercules and Deianira are by no means so: he is sentimental, and she most improperly sorrowful. However, I am pleased enough to beg you would continue. As soon as Mr. Müntz returns from the Vine you shall have a supply of colours. In the mean time why give up the good old trade of drawing? Have you no Indian ink, no soot-water, no snuff, no coat of onion, no juice of any thing? If you love me, draw: you would, if you knew the real pleasure you can give me. I have been studying all your drawings; and next to architecture and trees, I determine that you succeed in nothing better than animals. Now (as the newspapers say) the late ingenious Mr. Seymour is dead, I would recommend horses and greyhounds to you. I should think you capable of a landscape or two with delicious bits of architecture. I have known you execute the light of a torch or lanthorn so well, that if it was called Schalken, a housekeeper at Hampton-court or Windsor, or a Ca-

therine at Strawberry-hill, would show it, and say it cost ten thousand pounds. Nay, if I could believe that you would ever execute any more designs I proposed to you, I would give you a hint for a picture that struck me t'other day in Perefixe's Life of Henry IV. He says, the king was often seen lying upon a common straw bed among the soldiers, with a piece of brown bread in one hand, and a bit of charcoal in t'other, to draw an encampment, or town that he was besieging. If this is not character and a picture, I don't know what is.

I dined to-day at Garrick's: there were the duke of Grafton, lord and lady Rochford, lady Holderness, the crooked Mostyn, and Dabreu the Spanish minister; two regents, of which one is lord chamberlain, the other groom of the stole; and the wife of a secretary of state. This is being *sur un assez bon ton* for a player! Don't you want to ask me how I like him? Do want, and I will tell you—I like her exceedingly; her behaviour is all sense, and all sweetness too. I don't know how, he does not improve so fast upon me: there is a great deal of parts, and vivacity, and variety, but there is a great deal too of mimicry and burlesque. I am very ungrateful, for he flatters me abundantly; but unluckily I know it. I was accustomed to it enough when my father was first minister: on his fall I lost it all at once: and since that, I have lived with Mr. Chute, who is

all vehemence; with Mr. Fox, who is all disputation; with sir Charles Williams, who has no time from flattering himself; with Gray, who does not hate to find fault with me; with Mr. Conway, who is all sincerity; and with you and Mr. Rigby, who have always laughed at me in a good-natured way. I don't know how, but I think I like all this as well—I beg his pardon, Mr. Raftor does flatter me; but I should be a cormorant for praise, if I could swallow it whole as he gives it me.

Sir William Yonge, who has been extinct so long, is at last dead; and the war, which began with such a flirt of vivacity, is I think gone to sleep. General Braddock has not yet sent over to claim the surname of Americanus. But why should I take pains to show you in how many ways I know nothing?—Why; I can tell it you in one word—why, Mr. * * * knows nothing!—I wish you good-night!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, August 28, 1755.

Our piratic laurels, with which the French have so much reproached us, have been exceedingly pruned! Braddock is defeated and killed, by a handful of Indians and by the baseness of his own

troops, who sacrificed him and his gallant officers. Indeed, there is some suspicion that cowardice was not the motive, but resentment at having been draughted from Irish regiments.—Were such a desertion universal, could one but commend it? Could one blame men who should refuse to be knocked on the head for sixpence a day, and for the advantage and dignity of a few ambitious? But in this case, one pities the brave young officers, who cannot so easily disfranchise themselves from the prejudices of glory!—Our disappointment is greater than our loss: six-and-twenty officers are killed, who, I suppose, have not left a vast many fatherless and *widowless*, as an old woman told me to-day with great tribulation.—The ministry have a much more serious affair on their hands—Lord L. and lord A. have had a dreadful quarrel! *Coquus teterrima belli causa!* When lord * * * shot himself, lord L. said, "Well, I am very sorry for poor * * *! but it is the part of a wise man to make the best of every misfortune—I shall now have the best cook in England." This was uttered before lord A. Joràs,[1] who is a man of extreme punctilio, as cooks and officers ought to be, would not be hired till he knew whether this lord * * * would retain him. When it was decided that he would not, lord L. proposed

1 The name of the cook in question.

to hire Joras. Lord A. had already engaged him. Such a breach of friendship was soon followed by an expostulation (there was jealousy of the D. of Newcastle's favour already under the coals): in short, the nephew earl called the favourite earl such gross names, that it was well they were ministers! otherwise, as Mincing says, "*I vow, I believe they must have fit.*" The public, that is, half-a-dozen toad-eaters, have great hopes that the present unfavourable posture of affairs in America will tend to cement this breach, and that we shall all unite hand and heart against the common enemy.

I returned the night before last from my peregrination. It is very unlucky for me that no crown of martyrdom is entailed on zeal for antiquities; I should be a rubric martyr of the first class. After visiting the new salt-water baths at Harwich, (which, next to horse-racing, grows the most fashionable resource for people *who want to get out of town, and who love the country and retirement!*) I went to see Orford castle, and lord Hertford's at Sudborn. The one is a ruin, and the other ought to be so. Returning in a one-horse-chair over a wild vast heath, I went out of the road to see the remains of Buttley-abbey; which however I could not see: for, as the keys of Orford castle were at Sudborn, so the keys of Buttley were at Orford! By this time it was night; we lost our way, were in excessive rain for

above two hours, and only found our way to be overturned into the mire the next morning going into Ipswich. Since that I went to see an old house built by secretary Naunton.[2] His descendant, who is a strange retired creature, was unwilling to let us see it; but we did, and little in it worth seeing. The house never was fine, and is now out of repair; has a bed with ivory pillars and loose rings, presented to the secretary by some German prince or German artist; and a small gallery of indifferent portraits, among which there are scarce any worth notice but of the earl of Northumberland, Anna Bullen's lover, and of sir Antony Wingfield, who having his hand tucked into his girdle, the housekeeper told us, had had his fingers cut off by Harry VIII. But Harry VIII. was not a man *pour s'arrêter à ces minuties là!* While we waited for leave to see the house, I strolled into the church-yard, and was struck with a little door open into the chancel, through the arch of which I discovered cross-legged knights and painted tombs! In short, there are no less than eight considerable monuments, very perfect, of Wingfields, Nauntons, and a sir John Boynet and his wife, as old as Richard the second's time. But what charmed me still more, were two figures of secretary Naunton's father and mother in the win-

[2] Sir Robert Naunton, master of the court of wards.

dow in painted glass, near two feet high, and by far the finest painting on glass I ever saw. His figure, in a puffed doublet, breeches and bonnet, and cloak of scarlet and yellow, is absolutely perfect: her shoulder is damaged. This church, which is scarce bigger than a large chapel, is very ruinous, though containing such treasures! Besides these, there are brasses on the pavement with a succession of all the wonderful head-dresses, which our *plain virtuous* grandmothers invented to tempt our rude and simple ancestors.—I don't know what our nobles might be, but I am sure the milliners three or four hundred years ago must have been more accomplished in the arts, as Prynne calls them, of crisping, curling, frizzling, and frouncing, than all the tirewomen of Babylon, modern Paris, or modern Pall-Mall. Dame Winifred Boynet, whom I mentioned above, is accoutred with the coiffure called piked horns, which, if there were any signs in Lothbury and Eastcheap, must have brushed them about strangely, as their ladyships rode behind their gentlemen ushers! Adieu!

Yours ever.

To * * * *

Woolterton, Sept. 10, 1755.

DEAR ETOUGH,[1]

I CANNOT forbear any longer to acknowledge the many favours from you lately; your last was the 8th of this month. His majesty's speedy arrival among his British subjects is very desirable and necessary, whatever may be the chief motive for his making haste. As to Spain, I have from the beginning told my friends, when they asked, both in town and country, that I was not at all apprehensive that Spain would join with France against us; for this plain reason, because it could not possibly be the interest of the Spaniards to do it; for should the views of the French take place in making a line of forts from the Missisippi to Canada, and of being masters of the whole of that extent of country, Peru, and Mexico, and Florida, would be in more danger from them than the British settlements in America.

Mr. Fowle has made me a visit for a few days,

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[1] The Rev. Henry Etough of Pembroke-hall, Cambridge. He received his education among the dissenters, and archbishop Secker and Dr. Birch were among his schoolfellows. Through the interest of sir Robert Walpole he was presented to the rectory of Therfield in Hertfordshire, where he died in his 70th year, Aug. 10, 1757.

and communicated to me your two pieces relating to my brother and lord Bolingbroke, and I think you do great justice to them both in their very different and opposite characters, but you will give me leave to add with respect to lord Orford, there are several mistakes and misinformations, of which I am persuaded I could convince you, by conversation, but my observations are not proper for a letter. Of this more fully when I see you, but when that will be I can't yet tell.

I am ever most affectionately yours, &c.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, September 18, 1755.

MY DEAR SIR,

AFTER an expectation of six weeks, I have received a letter from you, dated August 23d. Indeed I did not impute any neglect to you; I knew it arose from the war; but Mr. * * * tells me the pacquets will now be more regular—— Mr. * * * tells me!—What, has he been in town, or at Strawberry?—No; but I have been at Southampton: I was at the Vine; and on the arrival of a few fine days, the first we have had this summer, after a deluge, Mr. Clute persuaded me to take a jaunt to Winchester and Netley-abbey,

with the latter of which he is very justly enchanted.

I was disappointed in Winchester: it is a paltry town, and small: king Charles the second's house is the worst thing I ever saw of sir Christopher Wren, a mixture of a town-hall and an hospital; not to mention the bad choice of the situation in such a country; it is all *ups* that should be *downs*. I talk to you as supposing that you never have been at Winchester, though I suspect you have, for the entrance of the cathedral is the very idea of that of Mabland. I like the smugness of the cathedral, and the profusion of the most beautiful Gothic tombs. That of cardinal Beaufort is in a style more free and of more taste than any thing I have seen of the kind. His figure confirms me in my opinion that I have struck out the true history of the picture that I bought of Robinson; and which I take for the marriage of Henry VI. Besides the monuments of the Saxon kings, of Lucius, William Rufus, his brother, &c. there are those of six such great or considerable men as Beaufort, William of Wickham, him of Wainfleet. the bishops Fox and Gardiner, and my lord treasurer Portland—How much power and ambition under half-a-dozen stones! I own, I grow to look on tombs as lasting mansions, instead of observing them for curious pieces of architecture!

——Going into Southampton, I passed Bevismount, where my lord Peterborough

Hung his trophies o'er his garden gate;

but general Mordaunt was there, and we could not see it. We walked long by moon-light on the terrass along the beach—Guess, if we talked of and wished for you! The town is crowded; sea-baths are established there too. But how shall I describe Netley to you? I can only, by telling you that it is the spot in the world for which Mr. Chute and I wish. The ruins are vast, and retain fragments of beautiful fretted roofs pendent in the air, with all variety of Gothic patterns of windows wrapped round and round with ivy—many trees are sprouted up amongst the walls, and only want to be increased with cypresses! A hill rises above the abbey, encircled with wood: the fort, in which we would build a tower for habitation, remains with two small platforms. This little castle is buried from the abbey in a wood, in the very centre, on the edge of the hill: on each side breaks in the view of the Southampton-sea, deep blue, glistering with silver and vessels; on one side terminated by Southampton, on the other by Calshot-castle; and the Isle of Wight rising above the opposite hills.—In short, they are not the ruins of Netley, but of Paradise —— Oh! the purple abbots, what a spot had they chosen to slumber in! The scene is so beautifully tranquil, yet so lively, that they seem only to have *retired into* the world.

I know nothing of the war, but that we catch

little French ships like crawfish. They have taken one of ours with governor * * * going to * * *. He is a very worthy young man, but so stiffened with sir * * *'s old fustian, that I am persuaded he is at this minute in the citadel of Nantes comparing himself to Regulus.

Gray has lately been here. He has begun an ode, which if he finishes equally, will, I think, inspirit all your drawing again. It is founded on an old tradition of Edward I. putting to death the Welsh bards. Nothing but you, or Salvator Rosa, and Nicolo Poussin, can paint up to the expressive horror and dignity of it. Don't think I mean to flatter you; all I would say is, that now the two latter are dead, you must of necessity be Gray's painter. In order to keep your talent alive, I shall next week send you flake white, brushes, oil, and the enclosed directions from Mr. Müntz, who is still at the Vine, and whom, for want of you, we labour hard to form. I shall put up in the parcel two or three prints of my eagle, which, as you never would draw it, is very moderately performed; and yet the drawing was much better than the engraving. I shall send you too a trifling snuff-box, only as a sample of the new manufacture at Battersea, which is done with copper-plates. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, where I cannot say any works go on in proportion to my impatience. I have left him an *inventionary* of all I want to have done there; but I believe it may be bound up

with the century of projects of that foolish marquis of Worcester, who printed a catalogue of titles of things, which he gave no directions to execute, nor believe could. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 23, 1755.

DEAR HARRY,

NEVER make me excuses for a letter that tells me so many agreeable things as your last; that you are got well to Dublin;[1] that you are all well, and that you have accommodated all your politics to your satisfaction—and I may be allowed to say, greatly to your credit. What could you tell me that would please me so much?

When I have indulged a little my joy for your success and honour, it is natural to consider the circumstances you have told me; and you will easily excuse me if I am not quite as much satisfied with the conduct of your late antagonists, as I am with yours. You have tranquillized a nation, have repaired your master's honour, and secured the

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[1] Mr. Conway was now secretary of state to the marquis of Hartington, lord lieutenant of Ireland.

peace of your administration;—but what shall one say to the speaker, Mr. Malone and the others? Don't they confess that they have gone the greatest lengths, and risqued the safety of their country on a mere personal pique? If they did not contend for profit, like our patriots (and you don't tell me that they have made any lucrative stipulations), yet it is plain that their ambition had been wounded, and that they resented their power being crossed. But I, who am whig to the backbone, indeed in the strictest sense of the word, feel hurt in a tenderer point, and which you, who are a minister, must not allow me: I am offended at their agreeing to an address that avows such deference for prerogative, and that is to protest so deeply against having intended to attack it. However rebel this may sound at your court, my Gothic spirit is hurt; I do not love such loyal expressions from a parliament. I do not so much consider myself writing to Dublin castle, as from Strawberry castle, where you know how I love to enjoy my liberty. I give myself the airs, in my nutshell, of an old baron, and am tempted almost to say with an old earl of Norfolk, who was a very free speaker at least, if he was not an excellent poet,

When I am in my castle of Bungey,
Situate upon the river Waveney,
I ne care for the king of Cockney.

I have been roving about Hampshire, have been at Winchester and Southampton and twenty places, and have been but one day in London—consequently know as little news as if I had been shut up in Bungey castle. Rumours there are of great bickerings and uneasinesses; but I don't believe there will be any bloodshed of places, except Legge's,[2] which nobody seems willing to take—I mean as a sinecure. His majesty of Cockney is returned exceedingly well, but grown a little out of humour at finding that we are not so much pleased with all the Russians and Hessians that he has hired to recover the Ohio. We are an ungrateful people!

Make a great many compliments for me to my lady Ailesbury. I own I am in pain about Missy.[3] As my lady is a little coquette herself, and loves crowds and admiration and a court life, it will be very difficult for her to keep a strict eye upon Missy. The Irish are very forward and bold:—I say no more; but it would hurt you both extremely to have her marry herself idly; and I think my lord chancellor has not extended his matrimonial foresight to Ireland. However, I

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[2] Henry Bilson Legge, second son of William earl of Dartmouth; he was chancellor of the exchequer.

[3] Anne Seymour Conway, only child of Mr. Conway and lady Ailesbury, then an infant.

have much confidence in Mrs. Elizabeth Jones:* I am sure, when they were here, she would never let Missy whisper with a boy that was old enough to speak.

Adieu! As the winter advances, and plots thicken, I will write you letters that shall have a little more in them than this. In the mean time I am going to the Bath, not for my health, you know I never am ill, but for my amusement. I I never was there, and at present there are several of my acquaintance. The French academy have chosen my lord Chesterfield, and he has written them a letter of thanks that is the finest composition in the world: indeed, I was told so by those who have not seen it; but they would have told me so if they had seen it, whether it was the finest or the worst; suffices it to be his!

Yours ever.

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To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, September 30, 1755.

Solomon says, somewhere or other, I think it is in Castelvetro's, or Castelnuovo's, edition—is not there such a one?—that the infatuation of a nation

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* Miss Conway's nurse.

for a foolish minister is like that of a lover for an ugly woman: when once he opens his eyes, he wonders what the devil bewitched him. This is the text to the present sermon in politics, which I shall not divide under three heads, but tell you at once, that no minister was ever nearer the precipice than ours has been. I did tell you, I believe, that Legge had refused to sign the warrant for the Hessian subsidy: in short, he heartily resented the quick coldness that followed his exaltation, waited for an opportunity of revenge, found this; and to be sure no vengeance ever took speedier strides. All the world revolted against subsidiary treaties; nobody was left to defend them but Murray, and he did not care to venture. Offers of graciousness, of cabinet counsellor, of chancellor of the exchequer, were made to right and left. Dr. Lee was conscientious; Mr. Pitt might be brought in compliment to his M. to digest one——But a system of subsidies!—Impossible! In short, the very first ministership was offered to be made over to my lord Granville—He begged to be excused—he was not fit for it.—Well! you laugh: all this is fact. At last we were forced to strike sail to Mr. Fox: he is named for secretary of state, with not only the lead, but the power of the house of commons. You ask, in the room of which secretary? What signifies of which? Why, I think of sir Thomas Robinson, who returns to his wardrobe, and lord Barrington

comes into the war-office. This is the present state of things in this grave reasonable island: the union hug like two cats over a string; the rest are arming for opposition——But I will not promise you any more warlike winters; I remember how soon the campaign of the last was addled.

In Ireland, Mr. Conway has pacified all things: the Irish are to get as drunk as ever to the glorious and immortal memory of king George, and the prerogative is to be exalted as high as ever, by being obliged to give up the primate.—— There! I think I have told you volumes: yet I know you will not be content; you will want to know something of the war and of America: but I assure you it is not the *bon-ton* to talk of either this week. We think not of the former, and of the latter we should think to very little purpose, for we have not heard a syllable more; Braddock's defeat still remains in the situation of the longest battle that ever was fought with nobody. Content your English spirit with knowing that there are very near three thousand French prisoners in England, taken out of several ships.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, October 7, 1755.

My dear Sir,

Nobody living feels more for you than I do: nobody knows better either the goodness and tenderness of your heart, or the real value of the person you have lost.[1] I cannot flatter myself that any thing I could say would comfort you under an affliction so well founded; but I should have set out and endeavoured to share your concern, if Mrs. Trevor had not told me that you were going into Cheshire. I will only say, that if you think change of place can contribute at all to divert your melancholy, you know where you would be most welcome, and whenever you will come to Strawberry-hill, you will at least, if you do not find a comforter, find a most sincere friend that pities your distress, and would do any thing upon earth to alleviate your misfortune. If you can listen yet to any advice, let me recommend to you, to give up all thoughts of Greatworth; you will never be able to support life there any more: let me look out for some little box for you in my neighbourhood. You can live no where,

[1] His sister, miss Harriet Montagu.

where you will be more beloved; and you will there always have it in your power to enjoy company or solitude, as you like. I have long wished to get you so far back into the world; and now it is become absolutely necessary for your health and peace. I will say no more, lest too long a letter should be either troublesome, or make you think it necessary to answer; but do not, till you find it more agreeable to vent your grief this way, than in any other.

I am, my good sir,
With hearty concern and affection,
Yours most sincerely.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, Oct. 19, 1755.

Do you love royal quarrels? You may be served —I know you don't love an invasion — nay, that even passes my taste; *it will make too much party.* In short, the lady dowager Prudence begins to step a little over the threshold of that discretion which she has always hitherto so sanctimoniously observed. She is suspected of strange whims; so strange, as neither to like more German subsidies or more German matches. A strong fac-

tion, professedly against the treaties,[1] openly against Mr. Fox, and covertly under the banners of the aforesaid *lady Prudence*, arm from all quarters against the opening of the session. Her ladyship's eldest boy declares violently against being *bewolfenbuttled* — a word which I don't pretend to understand, as it is not in Mr. Johnson's new dictionary. There! now I have been as enigmatic as ever I have accused you of being; and hoping you will not be able to expound my German hieroglyphics, I proceed to tell you in plain English that we are going to be invaded. I have within this day or two seen grandees of ten, twenty, and thirty thousand pounds a year, who are in a mortal fright: consequently, it would be impertinent in much less folk to tremble — and accordingly they don't. At court there is no doubt but an attempt will be made before Christmas. — I find valour is like virtue: impregnable as they boast themselves, it is discovered that on the first attack both lie strangely open! They are raising more men, camps are to be formed in Kent and Sussex, the duke of Newcastle is frightened out of his wits, which though he has lost so often, you know he always recovers, and as fresh as ever. Lord E***** despairs of the

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1 Treaties of subsidy with the landgrave of Hesse and the empress of Russia, for the defence of Hanover.

commonwealth; and I am going to fortify my castle of Strawberry, according to an old charter I should have had, for embattling and making a deep ditch—But here am I laughing, when I really ought to cry both with my public eye and my private one. I have told you what I think ought to sluice my public eye: and your private eye too will moisten, when I tell you that poor miss Harriet Montagu is dead. She died about a fortnight ago; but having nothing else to tell you, I would not send a letter so far with only such melancholy news—and so, you will say, I staid till I could tell still more bad news. The truth is, I have for some time had two letters of yours to answer: it is three weeks since I wrote to you, and one begins to doubt whether one shall ever be to write again. I will hope all my best hopes, for I have no sort of intention at this time of day of finishing either as a martyr or a hero.—I rather intend to live and record both those professions, if need be—and I have no inclination to scuttle barefoot after a duke of Wolfenbuttle's army, as Philip de Comines says he saw their graces of Exeter and Somerset trudge after the duke of Burgundy's. The invasion, though not much in fashion yet, begins like Moses's rod, to swallow other news, both political and *suicidical.* Our politics I have sketched out to you, and can only add, that Mr. Fox's ministry does not as yet promise to be of long duration. When it was

first thought that he had got the better of the duke of Newcastle, Charles Townshend said admirably, that he was sure the duchess, like the old cavaliers, would make a vow not to shave her beard till the restoration.

I can't recollect the least morsel of a fess or chevron of the Boynets: they did not happen to enter into any extinct genealogy for whose welfare I interest myself. I sent your letter to Mr. Chute, who is still under his own vine: Mr. Müntz is still with him, recovering of a violent fever.—Adieu! If memoirs don't grow too memorable, I think this season will produce a large crop.

Yours ever.

P. S. I believe I scarce ever mentioned to you last winter the follies of the opera: the impertinences of a great singer were too old and too common a topic. I must mention them now, when they rise to any improvement in the character of national folly. The Mingotti, a noble figure, a great mistress of music, and a most incomparable actress, surpassed any thing I ever saw for the extravagance of her humours. She never sung above one night in three, from a fever upon her temper; and never would act at all when Ricciarelli, the first man, was to be in dialogue with her. Her fevers grew so high, that the audience caught them, and hissed her more

than once: she herself once turned and hissed again—Tit pro tat geminat τον δ' απαμειβομενη· — Well, among the treaties which a secretary of state has negotiated this summer, he has contracted for a *succedaneum* to the Mingotti. In short, there is a woman hired to sing when the other shall be out of humour!

Here is a World by lord Chesterfield:[2] the first part is very pretty, till it runs into witticism. I have marked the passages I particularly like.

You would not draw Henry IV. at a siege for me: pray don't draw Louis XV.[3]

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, October 31, 1755.

As the invasion is not ready, we are forced to take up with a victory. An account came yesterday, that general Johnson had defeated the French near the lake St. Sacrement, had killed one thousand, and taken the lieutenant-general who commanded them, prisoner; his name is Dieskau, a Saxon, an esteemed *elève* of marshal

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[2] Number 146, of the fifth volume.

[3] Alluding to the subject Mr. Walpole had proposed to him for a picture, in a Letter dated 15th of August, and to the then expected invasion of England by Louis XV.

Saxe. By the printed account, which I enclose, Johnson showed great generalship and bravery. As the whole business was done by irregulars, it does not lessen the faults of Braddock, and the panic of his troops. If I were so disposed, I could conceive that there are heroes in the world who are not quite pleased with this extra-martinette success[1]—but we won't blame those Alexanders, till they have beaten the French in Kent! You know it will be time enough to abuse them, when they have done all the service they can! The other enclosed paper is another World,[2] by my lord Chesterfield; not so pretty, I think, as the last; yet it has merit. While England and France are at war, and Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt going to war, his lordship is coolly amusing himself at picquet at Bath with a Moravian baron, who would be in prison, if his creditors did not occasionally release him to play with and cheat my lord Chesterfield, as the only chance they have for recovering their money!

We expect the parliament to be thronged, and great animosities. I will not send you one of the eggs that are laid; for so many political ones have been addled of late years, that I believe all the state game-cocks in the world are impotent.

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[1] Alluding to William duke of Cumberland.

[2] Number 148, of the fifth volume.

I did not doubt but you would be struck with the death of poor B****. I, t'other night, at White's, found a very remarkable entry in our very—very remarkable wager-book: "Lord **** bets sir **** twenty guineas that Nash outlives Cibber!" How odd that these two old creatures, selected for their antiquities, should live to see both their wagerers put an end to their own lives! Cibber is within a few days of eighty-four, still hearty, and clear, and well. I told him I was glad to see him look so well: "'Faith," said he, "it is very well that I look at all!"——I shall thank you for the Ormer shells and roots; and shall desire your permission to finish my letter already. As the parliament is to meet so soon, you are likely to be overpowered with my dispatches.—I have been thinning my wood of trees, and planting them out more into the field: I am fitting up the old kitchen for a china-room: I am building a bed-chamber for myself over the old blue-room, in which I intend to die, though not yet; and some trifles of this kind, which I do not specify to you, because I intend to reserve a little to be quite new to you. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 8, 1755.

MY DEAR SIR,

You oblige me extremely by giving me this commission; and though I am exceedingly unlike Solomon in every thing else, I will at least resemble him in remembering you to the Hiram, from whom I obtained my cedars of Libanus. He is by men called Christopher Gray, nurseryman at Fulham. I mention cedars first, because they are the most beautiful of the evergreen race, and because they are the dearest; half a guinea a-piece in baskets. The arbutus are scarce a crown a-piece, but they are very beautiful; the lignum-vitæ I would not recommend to you; they stink abominably if you touch them, and never make a handsome tree: the Chinese arbor-vitæ is very beautiful. I have a small nursery myself, scarce bigger than *one of those pleasant gardens* which Solomon describes, and which if his *fair one* meant *the church,* I suppose must have meant the *church-yard.* Well, out of this little *parsley-bed* of mine, I can furnish you with a few plants, particularly three Chinese arbor-vitæs, a dozen of the New England or lord Weymouth's pine, which is that beautiful tree, that we have so much admired at the duke of Argyle's for its

clean straight stem, the lightness of its hairy green, and for being feathered quite to the ground: they should stand in a moist soil, and care must be taken every year to clear away all plants and trees round them, that they may have free air and room to expand themselves. Besides these I shall send you twelve stone or Italian pines, twelve pinasters, twelve black spruce firs, two Caroline cherries, thirty evergreen cytisus, a pretty shrub that grows very fast, and may be cut down as you please, fifty Spanish brooms, and six acacias, the genteelest tree of all, but you must take care to plant them in a first row, and where they will be well sheltered, for the least wind tears and breaks them to pieces. All these are ready, whenever you will give me directions, how, and where to send them. They are exceedingly small, as I have but lately taken to propagate myself; but then they will travel more safely, will be more sure of living, and will grow faster than larger. Other sorts of evergreens, that you must have, are silver and Scotch firs; Virginia cedars, which should stand forwards and have nothing touch them; and above all cypresses, which, I think, are my chief passion; there is nothing so picturesque, where they stand two or three in a clump, upon a little hillock, or rising above low shrubs, and particularly near buildings. There is another bit of picture, of

which I am fond, and that is a larch or a spruce fir planted behind a weeping willow, and shooting upwards as the willow depends. I think for courts about a house, or winter gardens, almond trees mixed with evergreens, particularly with Scotch firs, have a pretty effect, before any thing else comes out; whereas almond trees, being generally planted among other trees, and being in bloom before other trees have leaves, have no ground to shew the beauty of their blossoms. Gray at Fulham sells cypresses in pots at half a crown a-piece; you turn them out of the pot with all their mould, and they never fail. I think this is all you mean; if you have any more garden-questions or commissions, you know you command my little knowledge.

I am grieved that you have still any complaints left. Dissipation, in my opinion, will be the best receipt; and I do not speak merely for my own sake, when I tell you, how much I wish to have you keep your resolution of coming to town before Christmas. I am still more pleased with the promise you make to Strawberry, which you have never seen in its green coat, since it cut its teeth. I am here all alone, and shall stay till Tuesday, the day after the birth-day. On Thursday begins our warfare, and, if we may believe signs and tokens, our winter will be warlike: I mean at home; I have not much faith in the invasion. Her

royal highness[1] and his royal highness[2] are likely to come to an open rupture.

His grace of Newcastle, who, I think, has gone under every nick-name, waits I believe to see to which he will cling.

There have been two Worlds by my lord Chesterfield lately, very pretty, the rest very indifferent.

I beg my best compliments to Mrs. Whetenhall, and am, with great wishes for your health and tranquillity,

Yours most sincerely.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Nov. 15, 1755.

I promised you histories, and there are many people that take care I should have it in my power to keep my word. To begin in order, I should tell you, that there were 289 members at the Cockpit meeting, the greatest number ever known there: but Mr. Pitt, who is too great a general to regard numbers, especially when there was a probability of no great harmony between

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[1] The princess dowager. [2] The duke of Cumberland.

the commanders, did not however postpone giving battle. The engagement was not more decisive than long: we sat till within a quarter of five in the morning; an uninterrupted serious debate from before two. Lord Hillsborough moved the address, and very injudiciously supposed an opposition. Martin, Legge's secretary, moved to omit in the address the indirect approbation of the treaties, and the direct assurances of protection to Hanover. These questions were at length divided; and against Pitt's inclination, the last, which was the least unpopular, was first decided by a majority of 311 against 105. Many then went away; and on the next division the numbers were 290 to 89. These are the general outlines. The detail of the speeches, which were very long, and some extremely fine, it would be impossible to give you in any compass. On the side of the opposition (which I must tell you by the way, though it set out decently, seems extremely resolved) the speakers (I name them in their order) were: the 3d Colebrook, Martin, Northey, sir Richard Lyttelton, Doddington, George Grenville, sir F. Dashwood, Beckford, sir G. Lee, Legge, Potter, Dr. Hay, Geo. Townshend, lord Egmont, Pitt, and admiral Vernon: on the other side were, lord Hillsborough, Obrien, young Stanhope, Hamilton, Alstone, Ellis, lord Barrington, sir G. Lyttelton, Nugent, Murray, sir T. Robinson, my uncle, and Mr. Fox. As short

as I can, I will give you an account of them. Sir Richard, Beckford, Potter, G. Townshend, the admiral of course, Martin, and Stanhope were very bad: Doddington was well, but very *acceding:* Dr. Hay by no means answers his reputation; it was easy, but not striking. Lord Egmont was doubling, absurd, and obscure. Sir G. Lee and lord Barrington were much disliked; I don't think so **deservedly.** Poor A**** was mad, and spoke ten times to order. Sir George,[1] our friend, was dull and timid. Legge was the latter. Nugent roared, and sir Thomas rumbled. **Mr. Fox was** extremely fatigued, and did little. **Geo. Grenville's was very fine and much** beyond **himself, and very pathetic. The attorney general**[2] in the same style, **and very artful, was still** finer. Then there was **a young Mr. Hamilton**[3] who spoke for the first **time,** and was at once perfection: his speech was **set,** and full of antithesis, but those antitheses were **full** of argument: indeed his speech was the most argumentative of the whole day; and he broke through the regularity of **his** own composition, answered **other**

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1 Sir George Lyttelton.

2 William Murray, afterwards lord Mansfield.

3 William Gerard Hamilton. It was this speech which, not being followed, as was naturally expected, by repeated exhibitions of similar eloquence, acquired him the name of *single-speech* Hamilton.

people, and fell into his own track again with the greatest ease. His figure is advantageous, his voice strong and clear, his manner spirited, and the whole with the ease of an established speaker. You will ask, what could be beyond this? Nothing, but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt! He spoke at past one, for an hour and thirty-five minutes: there was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short, more astonishing perfections, than even you, who are used to him, can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides: he ridiculed my lord Hillsborough, crushed poor sir George, terrified the attorney, lashed my lord Granville, painted my lord of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the duke.[4] A few of the Scotch were in the minority, and most of the princess's people, not all: all the duke of Bedford's in the majority. He himself spoke in the other house for the address (though professing incertainty about the treaties themselves), against my lord Temple and lord Halifax, without a division. My lord Talbot was neuter; he and I were of a party: my opinion was strongly with the opposition; I could not vote for the treaties; I would not vote against Mr. Fox. It is ridiculous perhaps, at the end of such a debate, to give an

[4] The duke of Cumberland.

account of my own silence; and as it is of very little consequence what I did, so it is very unlike me to justify myself. You know how much I hate *professions* of integrity; and my pride is generally too great to care what the generality of people say of me: but your heart is good enough to make me wish you should think well of mine.

You will want to know what is to be the fate of the ministry in opposition: but that I can't tell you. I don't believe they have determined what to do, more than oppose, nor that it is determined what to do with them. Though it is clear that it is very humiliating to leave them in place, you may conceive several reasons why it is not eligible to dismiss them. *You* know where you are, how easy it is to buy an opposition who have not places; but tell us what to do with an opposition that has places? If you say, Turn them out; I answer, That is not the way to quiet any opposition, or a ministry so constituted as ours at present. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, November 16, 1755.

Never was poor invulnerable immortality so soon brought to shame! Alack! I have had the gout!

I would fain have persuaded myself that it was a sprain; and, then, that it was only the gout come to look for Mr. Chute at Strawberry-hill: but none of my evasions will do! I was, certainly, lame for two days; and though I repelled it — first, by getting wetshod, and then by spirits of camphire; and though I have since tamed it more rationally by leaving off the little wine I drank, I still know where to look for it whenever I have an occasion for a political illness. — Come, my constitution is not very much broken, when in four days after such a mortifying attack, I could sit in the house of commons, full as possible, from two at noon till past five in the morning, as we did but last Thursday. The new opposition attacked the address. — Who are the new opposition? — Why, the old opposition: Pitt and the Grenvilles; indeed, with Legge instead of sir George Lyttelton. Judge how entertaining it was to me, to hear Lyttelton answer Grenville, and Pitt Lyttelton! The debate, long and uninterrupted as it was, was a great deal of it extremely fine: the numbers did not answer to the merit: the new friends, the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Fox, had 311 to 105. The bon-mot in fashion is, that the staff was very good, but they wanted private men. Pitt surpassed himself, and then I need not tell you that he surpassed Cicero and Demosthenes. What a figure would they, with their formal, laboured, cabinet orations,

make *vis-à-vis* his manly vivacity and dashing eloquence at one o'clock in the morning, after sitting in that heat for eleven hours! He spoke above an hour and a half, with scarce a bad sentence: the most admired part was a comparison he drew of the two parts of the new administration, to the conflux of the Rhone and the Saone; "the latter a gentle, feeble, languid stream, languid but not deep; the other a boisterous and overbearing torrent: but they join at last; and long may they continue united, to the comfort of each other, and to the glory, honour and happiness of this nation!" I hope you are not mean-spirited enough to dread an invasion, when the senatorial contests are reviving in the temple of Concord.—*But will it make a party?* Yes, truly; I never saw so promising a prospect. Would not it be cruel, at such a period, to be laid up?

I have only had a note from you to promise me a letter; but it is not arrived:—but the partridges are, and well; and I thank you.

England seems *returning:*[1] for those who are not in parliament, there are nightly riots at Drury-lane, where there is an anti-Gallican party against some French dancers. The young men

[1] He means the disposition towards mobs and rioting at public places, which was then common among young men, and had been a sort of fashion in his early youth.

of quality have protected them till last night, when, being opera night, the galleries were victorious.

Montagu writes me many kind things for you: he is in Cheshire, but comes to town this winter. Adieu! I have so much to say, that I have time to say but very little.

Yours ever.

P. S. G. Selwyn hearing much talk of a sea-war or a continent, said, "I am for a sea-war and a *continent* admiral."

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, November 25, 1755.

I HAVE been so hurried since I came to town, and so enclosed in the house of commons, that I have not been able to write a line sooner. I now write, to notify that your plants will set out according to your direction next Monday, and are ordered to be left at Namptwich.

I differ with the doctors about planting evergreens in spring; if it happens to be wet weather, it may be better than exposing them to a first winter; but the cold dry winds, that generally prevail in spring, are ten times more perni-

cious. In my own opinion, the end of September is the best season, for then they shoot before the hard weather comes. But the plants I send you are so very small, that they are equally secure in any season, and would bear removing in the middle of summer; a handful of dung will clothe them all for the whole winter.

There is a most dreadful account of an earthquake in Lisbon, but several people will not believe it. There have been lately such earthquakes and waterquakes, and rocks rent, and other strange phenomena, that one would think the world exceedingly out of repair. I am not prophet enough to believe that such convulsions relate solely to the struggles between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, or even portend any between the Georges and James's. You have already heard, I suppose, that Pitt, Legge, and George Grenville, are dismissed, and that sir George Lyttelton is chancellor of the exchequer. My lord Temple says that sir George Lyttelton said he would quit his place when they did, and that he has kept his word! The world expects your cousin to resign; but I believe all efforts are used to retain him. *Joan, the fair maid of Saxe-Gotha,* did not speak to Mr. Fox or sir George, when they kissed her hand last Sunday. No more places are vacated or filled up yet.

It is an age since I have heard from Mr. Bent-

ley; the war, or the weather have interrupted all communication. Adieu! let me know, at your leisure, when one is likely to see you.

Yours ever.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Arlington-street, December 17, 1755.

After an immense interval, I have at last received a long letter from you, of a very old date (November 5th), which amply indemnifies my patience; nay, almost makes me amends for your blindness; for I think, unless you had totally lost your eyes, you would not refuse me a pleasure so easy to yourself, as now and then sending me a drawing.—I can't call it laziness—one may be too idle to amuse one's self; but sure one is never so fond of idleness as to prefer it to the power of obliging a person one loves! And yet I own your letter has made me amends; the wit of your pen recompenses the stupidity of your pencil; the *cæstus* you have taken up supplies a little the *artem* you have relinquished. I could quote twenty passages that have charmed me: the picture of lady Prudence and her family; your idol that gave you hail when you prayed for sunshine; misfortune the teacher of superstition; unmarried people being the fashion in heaven;

the *Spectator-hacked* phrases; Mr. Spence's blindness to Pope's mortality; and above all, the criticism on the queen in Hamlet, is most delightful. There never was so good a ridicule of all the formal commentators on Shakespear, nor so artful a banter on him himself for so improperly making her majesty deal in *doubles-entendres* at a funeral! In short, I never heard as much wit except in a speech with which Mr. Pitt concluded the debate t'other day on the treaties. His antagonists endeavour to disarm him; but as fast as they deprive him of one weapon, he finds a better —I never suspected him of such an universal armoury—I knew he had a Gorgon's head composed of bayonets and pistols, but little thought that he could tickle to death with a feather. On the first debate on these famous treaties, last Wednesday, Hume Campbell, whom the duke of Newcastle had retained as the most abusive counsel he could find against Pitt (and hereafter perhaps against Fox), attacked the former for *eternal invectives*. Oh! since the last Philippic of Billingsgate memory, you never heard such an invective as Pitt returned—Hume Campbell was annihilated! Pitt, like an angry wasp, seems to have left his sting in the wound—and has since assumed a style of delicate ridicule and repartee —— But think how charming a ridicule must that be that lasts and rises, flash after flash, for an hour and a half! Some day or other perhaps you will

see some of the glittering splinters that I gathered up. I have written under his print these lines, which are not only full as just as the original, but have not the tautology of *loftiness* and *majesty*:

> Three orators in distant ages born,
> Greece, Italy, and England did adorn:
> The first in loftiness of thought surpass'd,
> The next in language, but in both the last:
> The pow'r of nature could no farther go;
> To make a third, she join'd the former two.

Indeed we have wanted such an entertainment to enliven and make the fatigue supportable. We sat on Wednesday till ten at night; on Friday till past three in the morning; on Monday till between nine and ten. We have profusion of orators, and many very great, which is surprising so soon after the leaden age of the late right honourable Henry Saturnus![1] The majorities are as great as in Saturnus's *golden* age.

Our changes are begun; but not being made at once, our very changes change! Lord Duplin and lord Darlington are made joint pay-masters: George Selwyn says, that no act ever showed so much the duke of Newcastle's absolute power, as his being able to make lord Darlington *a pay-master*. That so often *repatrioted* and *reprostituted*

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1 Mr. Pelham.

prostitute Doddington is again to be treasurer of the navy: and he again drags out Harry Furnese into the treasury. The duke of Leeds is to be cofferer, and lord Sandwich emerges so far as to be chief justice in Eyre. — The other parts by the comedians — I don't repeat their names, because perhaps the fellow that to-day is designed to act Guildenstern, may to-morrow be destined to play *half* the part of the second grave-digger. However, they are all to kiss hands on Saturday. Mr. Pitt told me to-day that he should not go to Bath till next week. I fancy, said I, you scarce stay to kiss hands.

With regard to the invasion, which you are so glad to be allowed to fear, I must tell you that it is quite gone out of fashion again, and I really believe was dressed up for a vehicle (as the apothecaries call it) to make us swallow the treaties. All along the coast of France they are much more afraid of an invasion than we are!

As obliging as you are in sending me plants, I am determined to thank you for nothing but drawings. I am not to be bribed to silence, when you really disoblige me. Mr. Müntz has ordered more cloths for you. I even shall send you books unwillingly; and indeed why should I? As you are stone blind, what can you do with them? The few I shall send you, for there are scarce any new, will be a pretty dialogue by Crebillon; a strange imperfect poem, written by Voltaire when

he was very young, which with some charming strokes has a great deal of humour *manqué* and of impiety *estropiée;* and an historical romance, by him too, of the last war, in which is so outrageous a lying anecdote of old Marlborough, as would have convinced her, that when poets write history they stick as little to truth in prose as in verse. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Dec. 20, 1755.

I AM very much pleased that you are content with what are to be trees a thousand years hence, though they were the best my Libanus afforded. I was afraid you would think I had sent you a bundle of pick-tooths, instead of pines and firs: may you live to chat under their shade! I am still more pleased to hear that you are to be happy in some good fortune to the colonel: he deserves it; but, alas! what a claim is that! Whatever makes him happy, makes you so, and consequently me.

A regular opposition, composed of immense abilities, has entertained us for this month. George Grenville, Legge, a Dr. Hay, a Mr. Elliot, have shone; Charles Townshend lightened,

Pitt has rode in the whirlwind, and directed the storm with abilities beyond the common reach of the genii of a tempest. As soon as that storm has a little spent its fury, the dew of preferments begins to fall and fatten the land. Moses and Aaron differ indeed a little, in which shall dispense the manna, and both struggle for their separate tribes. Earl Gower is privy seal, the lords Darlington and Duplin joint paymasters, lord Gage paymaster of the pensions, Mr. O'Brien in the treasury. That old rag of a dish-clout ministry, Harry Furnese, is to be the other lord. Lord Bateman and Dick Edgecumbe[1] are the new admirals; Rigby, Soame Jennings, and Talbot the Welsh judge, lords of trade; the duke of Leeds cofferer, lord Sandwich chief justice in Eyre, Ellis and lord Sandys (*autre* dish-clout) divide the half of the treasury of Ireland, George Selwyn paymaster of the board of works, Arundel is to have a pension in Ireland, and lord Hillsborough succeeds him as treasurer of the chambers, though I thought he was as fond of his white staff as my lord Hobart will be, who is to have it. There, if you love new politics! You understand, to make these vacancies, that Charles Townshend and John Pitt are added to the dismissed and dead!

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[1] Lord Edgecumbe.

My lord Townshend is dying; the young lord Pembroke marries the charming lady Betty Spenser.[2] The French are thought to have *passed Eldest* as to England, and to intend *to take in* Hanover. I know an old potentate, who had rather have the gout in his stomach, than in that little toe. Adieu! I have sent your letter; make my compliments, and come to town.

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, Dec. 30, 1755.

As I know how much you are my friend and take part in my joy, I cannot help communicating to you an incident, that has given much pleasure. You know how much I love Mr. Mann — well, I won't enter into that, nor into a detail of many hardships, that he has suffered lately, which made me still more eager to serve him. As some regiments have been just given away, I cast my eyes about to see if I could not help him to clothing. Among the rest, there was one new colonel, whom I could not assume enough to call my friend, but who is much connected with one that is so. As

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[2] Daughter of the duke of Marlborough.

the time passed, I did not stay to go round about, but addressed myself directly to the person himself—but I was disappointed—the disaster was, that he had left his quarters and was come to town. Though I immediately gave it up in my own mind, knew how incessantly he would be pressed from much more powerful quarters, concluded he would be engaged, I wrote again; that letter was as useless as the first, and from what reason do you think? Why this person, in spite of all solicitations, nay previous to any, had already thought of Mr. Mann, had recollected it would oblige me and my friend in the country, and had actually given his clothing to Mr. Mann, before he received either of my letters. Judge how agreeably I have been surprised, and how much the manner has added to my obligation! You will be still more pleased, when you hear the character of this officer, which I tell you willingly, because I know you country gentlemen are apt to contract prejudices, and to fancy that no virtues grow out of your own shire; yet by this one sample, you will find them connected with several circumstances, that are apt to nip their growth. He is of as good a family as any in England, yet in this whole transaction, he has treated me with as much humility, as if I was of as good a family, and as if I had obliged him, not he me. In the next place, I have no power to oblige him; then, though he is young and in the

army, he is as good, as temperate, as meek, as if he was a curate on preferment; and yet with all these meek virtues, nobody has distinguished themselves by more personal bravery — and what is still more to his praise, though he has so greatly established his courage, he is as regular in his duty, and submits as patiently to all the tedious exiles and fatigues of it, as if he had no merit at all — but I will say no more, lest you imagine that the present warmth of my gratitude makes me exaggerate. — No, you will not, when you know that **all I have said relates** to your own brother, colonel Charles Montagu. I did not think he could have added still to my satisfaction; but he has, by giving me hopes of seeing you in town next week — till then adieu! Yours as entirely, as is consistent with my devotedness to your brother.

To RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, January 6, 1756.

I AM quite angry with you; you write me letters so entertaining, that they make me almost forgive your not drawing: now, you know, next to being disagreeable there is nothing so shocking as being too agreeable. However, as I am a true philosopher, and can resist any thing I like, when

it is to obtain any thing I like better, I declare, that if you don't coin the vast ingot of colours and cloth that I have sent you, I will burn your letters unopened.

Thank you for all your concern about my gout —but I shall not mind you; it shall appear in my stomach, before I attempt to keep it out of it by a fortification of wine: I only drank a little two days after being very much fatigued in the house, and the worthy pioneer began to cry *swear* from my foot the next day. However, though I am determined to feel young still, I grow to take the hints age gives me—I come hither oftener, I leave the town to the young; and though the busy turn that the world has taken draws me back into it, I excuse it to myself, and call it retiring into politics. From hence I must retire, or I shall be drowned; my cellars are four feet under water, the Thames gives itself Rhone airs, and the meadows are more flooded than when you first saw this place and thought it so dreary. We seem to have taken out our earthquake in rain: since the third week in June, there have not been five days together of dry weather. They tell us that at Colnbrook and Stains they are forced to live in the first floor. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, but I don't expect to hear from him; no post but a dove can get from thence. Every post brings new earthquakes; they have felt them in France, Sweden, and Germany:—what a convulsion there

has been in nature! Sir Isaac Newton, somewhere in his works, has this beautiful expression, The globe will want *manum emendatricem.*

I have been here this week with only Mr. Müntz; from whence you may conclude I have been employed—Memoirs thrive apace. He seems to wonder (for he has not a little of your indolence, I am not surprised you took to him) that I am continually occupied every minute of the day, reading, writing, forming plans: in short, you know me. He is an inoffensive good creature, but had rather ponder over a foreign gazette than a pallet.

I expect to find George Montagu in town to-morrow: his brother has at last got a regiment. Not content with having deserved it, before he got it, by distinguished bravery and indefatigable duty, he persists in meriting it still. He immediately, unasked, gave the chaplainship (which others always sell advantageously) to his brother's parson at Greatworth. I am almost afraid it will make my commendation of this really handsome action look interested, when I add, that he has obliged me in the same way, by making Mr. Mann his clothier, before I had time to apply for it. Adieu! I find no news in town.

Yours ever.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, January 24, 1756.

Oh! sir, I shall take care how I ever ask favours of you again! It was with great reluctance that I brought myself to ask this: you took no notice of my request; and I flattered myself that I was punished for having applied to you so much against my inclination. Just as I grew confirmed in the pride of being mortified, I hear that you have outgone my application, and in the kindest manner in the world have given the young man a pair of colours. It would have been unpleasant enough to be refused; but to obtain more than one asked is the most provoking thing in the world! I was prepared to be very grateful if you had done just what I desired; but I declare I have no thanks ready for a work of supererogation. If there ever was a saint that went to heaven for mere gratitude, which I am persuaded is a much more uncommon qualification than martyrdom, I must draw upon his hoard of merit to acquit myself. You will at least get thus much by this charming manner of obliging me: I look upon myself as doubly obliged: and when it cost me so much to ask one favour, and I find myself in debt for two, I shall scarce run in tick for a third.

What adds to my vexation is, that I wrote to

you but the night before last. Unless I could return your kindness with equal grace, it would not be very decent to imitate you by beginning to take no notice of it; and therefore you must away with this letter upon the back of the former.

We had yesterday some history in the house: Beckford produced an accusation in form against admiral K***** on his way to an impeachment. Governor Verres was a puny culprit in comparison! Jamaica indeed has not quite so many costly temples and ivory statues, &c. as Sicily had: but what K***** could not or had not a propensity to commit in rapine and petty larceny, he has made up in tyranny. The papers are granted, and we are all going to turn jurymen. The rest of the day was spent in a kind of avoirdupoise war. Our friend sir George Lyttelton opened the budget; well enough in general, but was strangely bewildered in the figures; he stumbled over millions, and dwelt pompously upon farthings. Pitt attacked him pretty warmly on mortgaging the sinking fund: sir George kept up his spirit, and returned the attack on eloquence. It was entertaining enough, but ended in high compliments; and the division was 231 to 56.

Your friend lady **** *****, not to let the town quite lapse into politics, has entertained it with a new scene. She was t'other night at the play with her court; viz. miss ****, lord Bar-

nard, monsieur St. Simon, and her favourite footman Richard, whom, under pretence of keeping places, she always keeps in her box the whole time to see the play at his ease. Mr. Stanley, colonel Vernon, and Mr. Vaughan arrived at the very end of the farce, and could find no room, but a row and half in lady *****'s box. Richard denied them entrance very impertinently. Mr. Stanley took him by the hair of his head, dragged him into the passage, and thrashed him. The heroine was outrageous—the heroes not at all so. She sent Richard to Fielding for a warrant—He would not grant it—and so it ended—— And so must I, for here is company. Adieu!

Yours ever.

My letter would have been *much cleverer*, but George Montague has been chattering by me the whole time, and insists on my making you his compliments.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, Feb. 12, 1756.

I WILL not write to my lady Ailesbury to-night, nor pretend to answer the prettiest letter in the world, when I am out of spirits. I am very un-

happy about poor Mr. Mann,[1] who I fear is in a deep consumption: the doctors do not give him over, and the symptoms are certainly a little mended this week; but you know how fallacious that distemper is, and how unwise it would be to trust to it! As he is at Richmond, I pass a great deal of my time out of town to be near him, and so may have missed some news; but I will tell you all I know.

The house of commons is dwindled into a very dialogue between Pitt and Fox—one even begins to want admiral Vernon again for variety. Sometimes it is a little piquant; in which though Pitt has attacked, Fox has generally had the better. These three or four last days we have been solely upon the Pennsylvanian regiment, bickering, and but once dividing 165 to 57. We are got but past the first reading yet. We want the French to put a little vivacity into us. The duke of Newcastle has expected them every hour: he was terribly alarmed t'other night; on his table he found a mysterious card with only these words, *Charles is very well, and is expected in England every day.* It was plainly some secret friend that advertised him of the pretender's approaching arrival. He called up all the servants, ransacked

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1 Galfridus Mann, twin brother to sir Horace Mann, the envoy at Florence: he died the end of this year.

the whole house to know who had been in his dressing-room:—at last it came out to be an answer from the duchess of Queensberry to the duchess of Newcastle about lord Charles Douglas. Don't it put you in mind of my lord treasurer Portland in Clarendon, *Remember Cæsar!*

The French have promised letters of *noblesse* to whoever fits out even a little privateer. I could not help a melancholy smile when my lady A***** talked of coming over soon. I fear major-general *you* will scarce be permitted to return to your plough at Park-place, when we grudge every man that is left at the plough. Between the French and the earthquakes,[2] you have no notion how good we are grown; nobody makes a suit of clothes now but of sackcloth turned up with ashes. The fast was kept so devoutly, that Dick Edgecumbe,[3] finding a very lean hazard at White's, said with a sigh, "Lord, how the times are degenerated! Formerly a fast would have brought every body hither; now it keeps every body away!" A few nights before, two men walking up the Strand, one said to t'other, "Look how red the sky is! Well, thank God! there is to be no masquerade!"

My lord A***** does not keep a fast; he is

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[2] The dreadful earthquake which had taken place at Lisbon towards the end of the preceding year.

[3] Richard Edgecumbe second lord Edgecumbe.

going to marry one of the plump C****'s:—they call him the noble lord upon the woolsack.

The duchess of Norfolk has opened her new house: all the earth was there last Tuesday. You would have thought there had been a comet, every body was gaping in the air and treading on one another's toes. In short, you never saw such a scene of magnificence and taste. The tapestry, the embroidered bed, the illumination, the glasses, the lightness and novelty of the ornaments, and the ceilings, are delightful. She gives three Tuesdays, would you could be at one! Somebody asked my lord Rockingham afterwards at White's, what was there? He said, "Oh! there was all the company afraid of the duchess, and the duke afraid of all the company."—It was not a bad picture.

My lady A***** flatters me extremely about my World, but it has brought me into a peck of troubles. In short, the good-natured town have been pleased to lend me a meaning, and call my lord Bute, *sir Eustace*.[4] I need not say how ill the story tallies to what they apply it; but I do vow to you, that so far from once entering into my imagination, my only apprehension was, that I should be suspected of flattery for the compli-

4 Sir Eustace Drawbridgecourt. See World, No. 160, 5th vol.

ment to the princess in the former part. It is the more cruel, because you know it is just the thing in the world on which one must not defend one's self. If I might, I can prove that the paper was writ last Easter, long before this history was ever mentioned, and flung by, because I did not like it: I mentioned it one night to my lady Hervey, which was the occasion of its being printed.

I beg you will tell my lady A***** that I am sorry she could not discover any *wit* in Mrs. Hussey's making a septleva. I know I never was so vain of any wit in my life as in winning a thousand leva and two five hundred levas.

You would laugh if you saw in the midst of what trumpery I am writing. Two porters have just brought home my purchases from Mrs. Kennon the midwife's sale. Brobdingnag combs, old broken pots, pans, and pipkins, a lanthorn of scraped oyster-shells, scimitars, Turkish pipes, Chinese baskets, &c. &c. My servants think my head is turned; I hope not: it is all to be called the personal estate and moveables of my great great grand-mother, and to be reposited at Strawberry. I believe you think my letter as strange a miscellany as my purchases.

Yours ever.

P. S. I forgot, that I was outbid for Oliver Cromwell's nightcap.

TO THE HON H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington-street, March 4, 1756.

DEAR HARRY,

I HAVE received so kind and so long a letter from you, and so kind too because so long, that I feel I shall remain much in your debt, at least for length. I won't allow that I am in your debt for warmth of friendship. I have nothing worth telling you: we are hitherto conquered only in threat: for my part, I have so little expectation of an invasion, that I have not buried a single enamel, nor bought a pane of painted glass the less: of the two panics in fashion, the French and the earthquake, I have not even made my option yet. The opposition get ground as little as either: Mr. Pitt talks by Shrewsbury clock, and is grown almost as little heard as that is at Westminster. We have had full eight days on the Pennsylvanian regiment. The young Hamilton has spoken and shone again; but nothing is luminous compared with Charles Townshend:—he drops down dead in a fit, has a resurrection, thunders in the capitol, confounds the treasury-bench, laughs at his own party, is laid up the next day, and overwhelms the duchess and the good women that go to nurse him! His brother's militia-bill does not come on till next week: in the mean time he adorns the shutters, walls, and napkins of

every tavern in Pall-mall with caricatures of the duke[1] and sir George Lyttelton, the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Fox. Your friend Legge has distinguished himself exceedingly on the supplies and taxes, and retains all the dignity of chancellor of the exchequer. I think I never heard so complete a scene of ignorance as yesterday on the new duties! Except Legge, you would not have thought there was a man in the house had learned troy-weight: Murray quibbled—at Hume Campbell the house groaned! Pitt and Fox were lamentable; poor sir George never knew prices from duties, nor drawbacks from premiums! The three taxes proposed were on plate, on bricks and tiles, on cards and dice. The earthquake has made us so good, that the ministry might have burned the latter in Smithfield if they had pleased. The bricks they were forced to give up, and consented graciously to accept 70,000*l.* on ale-houses, instead of 30,000*l.* on bricks. They had nearly been forced to extend the duty on plate beyond 10*l.* carrying the restriction by a majority of only two.

An embargo is laid on the shipping, to get sailors. The young court lords were going to raise troops of light-horse, but my lord Gower (I suppose by direction of the duke) proposed to the

[1] The duke of Cumberland.

king, that they should rather employ their personal interest to recruit the army; which scheme takes place, and, as **** said in the house, they are all turning recruiting serjeants. But notwithstanding we so much expect a storm from France, I am told that in France they think much more of their own internal storms than of us. Madame Pompadour wears devotion, whether forced or artful is not certain: the disputes between the king and the parliament run very high, and the duke of Orleans and the prince of Conti have set themselves at the head of the letter. Old N**** came fuddled to the opera last week, and jostled an ancient lord Irwin, and then called him fool for being in his way: they were going to fight; but my lord Talbot, professing that he did not care if they were both hanged, advised them to go back and not expose themselves. You will stare perhaps at my calling N **** *old*: it is not merely to distinguish him from his son; but he is such a champion and such a lover, that it is impossible not to laugh at him as if he was a Methuselah! He is *en affaire reglée* with lady ****: at a supper there a few nights ago of two-and-twenty people, they were talking of his going to ——— to direct some alterations: Mrs. N**** in the softest infantine voice called out, "My lady ****, don't let him do any thing out of doors; but you will find him delightful within!"

I think I have nothing else to tell you but a

bon-mot or two; with that sort of news I think I take care to supply you duly. I send you constantly the best that London affords. Dick Edgecumbe has said that his last child was born on *All-gamesters'-day*; Twelfth-night.

This chapter shall conclude with an epigram; the thought was George Selwyn's, who you know serves all the epigram-makers in town with wit. It is on miss Chudleigh crying in the drawing-room on the death of her mother:

> What filial piety! what mournful grace,
> For a lost parent, sits on Chudleigh's face!
> Fair virgin, weep no more, your anguish smother!
> You in this town can never want a mother.

I have told poor Mr. Mann how kind you are to him: indeed I have been exceedingly frightened and troubled for him, and thought him in immediate danger. He is certainly much mended, though I still fear a consumption for him: he has not been able to move from Richmond this whole winter: I never fail to visit him twice or thrice a week. I heartily pity the fatigue and dulness of your life; nor can I flatter you with pretending to believe it will end soon: I hope you will not be forced to gain as much reputation in the camp as you have in the cabinet!—You see I must finish.

Yours ever.

To the Hon. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry-hill, April 16, 1756.

You wrong me very much in thinking I omit writing because I don't hear from you as often as you have a mind I should: you are kinder to me in that respect than I have reason, considering your numerous occupations, to expect: the real and whole truth is, that I have had nothing to tell you; for I could not tire either you or myself with all the details relating to this foolish road-bill,[1] which has engrossed the whole attention of every body lately. I have entered into it less than any body. What will you say when you are told that proxies have been sent for to Scotland? that my lord Harrington has been dragged into the house of lords from his coffin, and lord Arran carried thither to take the oaths, who I believe has not appeared there since the Revolution? In short, it has become quite a trial for power; and though the dukes of Grafton and Bedford have lent their names and their vehemence, you will

[1] The Paddington or New Road, which the duke of Bedford opposed as making a dust behind Bedford-house, and from some intended buildings being likely to interrupt his prospect. The duke of Grafton warmly espoused the other side of the question.

guess what has been the engine behind the curtain.

The French are so obliging as to wait till we have done with these important squabbles: the house of commons takes care too not to draw off the attention of the nation. The militia-bill has passed through that solitude, but I hear will be stopped in the house of lords. I have lived lately in a round of great disagreeable suppers, which you know are always called, for my lady Yarmouth, as if the poor woman loved nothing but cramming: I suppose it will so much become the etiquette, that in the next reign there will be nothing but suppers for my lord B****. I am now come hither to keep *my* Newmarket, but the weather is cold and damp: it is uncertain whether the duke makes that campaign, or against the French. As the road-bill extinguished the violence about the two operas of next year, and they made the invasion forgot, and the invasion the earthquake, I foresee—and I go almost upon as sure grounds as prophets that take care to let the event precede the prediction — I foresee that the Hanoverians will swallow up all: they have already a general named, who ranks before any one of ours; and there are to be two Hanoverian *aide-de-camps!*

You will hear by this post of the death of sir William Lowther, whose vast succession falls to sir

James, and makes him Crœsus: he may hire the dukes of Bedford and Marlborough for led captains. I am sorry for this young man, though I did not know him; but it is hard to be cut off so young and so rich: old rich men seldom deserve to live, but he did a thousand generous acts. You will be diverted with a speech of lord S**** one of those second-rate fortunes, who have not above five-and-thirty thousand pounds a year. He says, every body may attain some one point if they give all their attention to it; for his part, he knows he has no great capacity, he could not make a figure by his parts; he shall content himself with being one of the richest men in England! I literally saw him t'other day buying pictures for two-and-twenty shillings, that I would not hang in my garret; while I, who certainly have not made riches my sole point of view, was throwing away guineas, and piquing myself for old tombstones against your father-in-law the general.[2] I hope lady Ailesbury will forgive my zeal for Strawberry against Coombank! Are you ever to see your Strawberry-hill again? Lord Duncannon flatters us that we shall see you in May. If I did not hope it, I would send you the only two new fashionable pieces; a comic elegy by C**** and

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[2] General John Campbell, who upon the death of Archibald duke of Argyll succeeded to that title.

a wonderful book by a more wonderful author, Greville.* It is called Maxims and Characters: several of the former are pretty: all the latter so absurd, that one in particular, which at the beginning you take for the character of a man, turns out to be the character of a post-chaise.

You never tell me now any of Missy's *bons-mots*. I hope she has not resided in Ireland till they are degenerated into bulls! Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, April 20, 1756.

Your steward called on me just as I was going to keep my Newmarket at Strawberry-hill; he promised to leave me the direction to the statuary, but as I have not heard from him, I wish you would send it me.

The cold and the wet have driven me back to London, empty London! where we are more afraid of the deluge than of the invasion. The French are said to be sailed for Minorca, which I hold to be a good omen of their not coming hither;

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* Fulke Greville, esq.

for if they took England, Port-Mahon, I should think, would scarcely hold out.

Pray don't die, like a country body, because it is the fashion for gentlefolks to die in London; it is the *bon ton* now to die; one can't shew one's face without being a death's head. Mrs. Bethel and I are come strangely into fashion; but true critics in mode object to our having underjaws, and maintain that we are not dead *comme il faut*. The young lady Exeter[1] died almost suddenly, and has handsomely confirmed her father's will, by leaving her money to her lord only for his life, and then to Th. Townshend. Sir William Lowther has made a charming will, and been as generous at his death, as he was in his short life; he has left thirteen legacies of five thousand pounds each to friends; of which you know by sight, Reynolds, Mrs. Brudenel's son, and young Turner. He has given seventeen hundred pounds a year; that is, I suppose, seventeen hundred pounds, to old Mrs. Lowther — what an odd circumstance! a woman passing an hundred years to receive a legacy from a man of twenty-seven: after her it goes to lord George Cavendish. Six hundred pounds per year he gives to another Mrs. Lowther, to be divided afterwards between lord

1 Daughter and heir of Horatio, son of the first viscount Townshend.

Frederick and lord John. Lord Charles, his uncle, is residuary legatee. But what do you think of young Mr. James Lowther, who not of age becomes master of one or two and forty thousand pounds a year. England will become a heptarchy, the property of six or seven people! The duke of Bedford is fallen to be not above the fourth rich man in the island.

Poor lord Digby is likely to escape happily at last, after being cut for the stone, and bearing the preparation and execution, with such heroism, that waking with the noise of the surgeons, he asked if that was to be the day? "Yes;" "How soon will they be ready?" "Not for some time." "Then let me sleep till they are." He was cut by a new instrument of Hawkins, which reduces an age of torture to but one minute.

The duke had appeared in form on the causeway in Hyde-park with my lady Coventry; it is the new office, where all lovers now are entered. How happy she must be with Billy and Bully! I hope she will not mistake, and call the former by the nickname of the latter. At a great supper, t'other night at lord Hertford's, if she was not the best humoured creature in the world, I should have made her angry; she said in a very vulgar accent, if she drank any more, she should be *muckibus*;—"Lord!" said lady Mary Coke, "what is that?" "Oh! it is Irish for *sentimental*."

There is a new Morocco ambassador, who de-

clares for lady Caroline Petersham, preferably to lady Coventry. Lady Caroline Fox says he is the best bred of all the foreign ministers, and at one dinner said more obliging things than Mirepoix[2] did during his whole embassy. He is so fashionable that George Selwyn says he is sure my lady Winchelsea will ogle him instead of Haslang.

I shall send you soon the fruits of my last party to Strawberry; Dick Edgcumbe, George Selwyn, and Williams were with me; we composed a coat of arms for the two clubs at White's, which is actually engraving from a very pretty painting of Edgcumbe, whom Mr. Chute, as Strawberry king at arms, has appointed our chief herald painter; here is the blazon:

Vert (for card table) between three paroli's proper, on a chevron table (for hazard table) two rouleaus in saltire between two dice, proper in a canton, sable, a white ball (for election) argent.

Supporters. An old knave of *clubs*, on the dexter; a young knave on the sinister side, both accoutred proper.

Crest. Issuing out of an earl's coronet (lord Darlington) an arm shaking a dice box, all proper.

Motto. (Alluding to the crest) *cogit amor*

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[2] Duc de Mirepoix, French ambassador.

aummi. The arms encircled by a claret bottle ticket, by way of order.

By the time I hope to see you at Strawberry-hill, there will be a second volume of the Horatiana ready for the press; or a full and true account of the bloody civil wars of the house of Walpole, being a narrative of the unhappy differences between Horatio and Horace Walpoles; in short, the old wretch, who aspires to be one of the heptarchy, and who I think will live as long as old Mrs. Lowther, has accomplished such a scene of abominable avarice and dirt, that I, notwithstanding my desire to veil the miscarriages of my race, have been obliged to drag him and all his doings into light—but I won't anticipate. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

May 12.

Don't imagine I write to you for any thing but form; there is nothing like news, except the Prussian victories, which you see in the papers: by next courier we expect he will send us at least a leg or an arm of the empress queen.

Our domestic politics are far from settled. The king is gone to Kensington, and when any minis-

try can be formed, it is to be sent after him. The parliament draggles on, till any two of the factions can unite.

I have not got my tickets yet, but will certainly reserve what you want. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Arlington-street, May 19, 1756.

NOTHING will be more agreeable to me than to see you at Strawberry-hill; the weather does not seem to be of my mind, and will not invite you. —I believe the French have taken the sun. Among other captures, I hear the king has taken another English mistress, a Mrs. Pope, who took her degrees in gallantry some years ago. She went to Versailles with the famous Mrs. Quon; the king took notice of them; he was told they were not so rigid as *all* other English women are — mind, I don't give you any part of this history for authentic; you know we can have no news from France, but what we run. I have rambled so, that I forgot what I intended to say; if ever we can have spring, it must be soon; I propose to expect you any day you please after Sunday se'nnight, the 30th: let me know your resolution, and pray tell me in what magazine is the Straw-

berry ballad? I should have proposed an earlier day to you, but next week the prince of Nassau is to breakfast at Strawberry-hill, and I know your aversion to clashing with grandeur.

As I have already told you one mob story of a king, I will tell you another: *they say*, that the night the Hanover troops were voted, *he* sent * * * * * for his German cook, and said, "Get me a very good supper; get me all de varieties; I don't mind expence."

I tremble lest his Hanoverians should be encamped at Hounslow; Strawberry would become an inn; all the misses would breakfast there, to go and see the camp!

My lord Denbigh is going to marry a fortune, I forget her name: my lord Gower asked him how long the honey-moon would last? he replied, "Don't tell me of the honey-moon; it is harvest moon with me." Adieu!

Yours ever.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, June 6, 1756.

MY DEAR LORD,

I AM not sorry to be paving my way to Wentworth castle by a letter, where I suppose you are by this time, and for which I waited: it is not that I

staid so long before I executed my embassy *auprès de milord* Tylney. He has but one pair of gold pheasants at present, but promises my lady Strafford the first fruits of their loves. He gave me hopes of some pied peacocks sooner, for which I asked directly, as one must wait for the lying-in of the pheasants. If I go on *negotiating* so successfully, I may hope to arrive at a peerage a little sooner than my uncle has.

As your lordship, I know, is so good as to interest yourself in the calamities of your friends, I will, as shortly as I can, describe and grieve your heart with a catastrophe that has happened to two of them. My lady Ailesbury, Mr. Conway, and miss Rich passed two days last week at Strawberry-hill. We were returning from Mrs. Clive's through the long field, and had got over the high stile that comes into the road, that is, three of us. It had rained, and the stile was wet. I could not let miss Rich straddle across so damp a palfrey; but took her in my arms to lift her over. At that instant I saw a coach and six come thundering down the hill from my house; and hurrying to set down my charge, and stepping backwards, I missed the first step, came down headlong with the nymph in my arms; but turning quite round as we rushed to the ground, the first thing that touched the earth was miss Rich's head. You must guess in how improper a situation we fell; and you must not tell my lady Strafford before

any body, that every petticoat, &c. in the world were canted — high enough indeed! The coach came on, and never stopped. The apprehension that it would run over my Chloe, made me lie where I was, holding out my arm to keep off the horses, which narrowly missed trampling us to death. The ladies, who were lady Holderness, miss Pelham, and your sister lady Mary Coke, stared with astonishment at the theatre which they thought I had chosen to celebrate our loves; the footmen laughed; and you may imagine the astonishment of Mr. Conway and lady Ailesbury, who did not see the fall, but turned and saw our attitude. It was these spectators that amazed miss Pelham, who described the adventure to Mrs. Pitt, and said, "What was most amazing, there were Mr. Conway and lady Ailesbury looking on!" I shall be vexed to have told you this long story, if lady Mary has writ it already; only tell me honestly if she has described it as decently as I have.

If you have not got the new letters and memoirs of madame Maintenon, I beg I may recommend them for your summer reading. As far as I have got, which is but into the fifth volume of the letters, I think you will find them very curious, and some very entertaining. The fourth volume has persuaded me of the sincerity of her devotion; and two or three letters at the beginning of my present tome have made me even a

little jealous for my adored madame de Sevigné. I am quite glad to find that they do *not* continue equally agreeable. — The extreme misery to which France was reduced at the end of queen Anne's war, is more striking than one could conceive. I hope it is a debt that they are not going to pay, though the news that arrived on Wednesday have but a black aspect. — The consternation on the behaviour of Byng, and on the amazing council of war at Gibraltar, is extreme: many think both next to impossibilities. In the mean time we fear the loss of Minorca! I could not help smiling t'other day at two passages in madame Maintenon's letters relating to the duc de Richelieu, when he first came into the world: "*Jamais homme n'a mieux reussi à la cour, la premiere fois qu'il y a paru: c'est réellement une très-jolie creature!*" Again:—"*C'est la plus aimable poupée qu'on puisse voir.*" How mortifying, that this *jolie poupée* should be the avenger of the Valoises!

Adieu, my lord!—I don't believe that a daughter of the duke of Argyle[1] will think that the present I have announced in the first part of my letter balances the inglorious article in the end. I wish you would both renew the breed of heroes,

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[1] Lady Strafford was the youngest daughter of John duke of Argyle.

which seems scarcer than that of gold pheasants!

Your most faithful servant.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

June 18.

The two drawings of the Vine and Strawberry, which you desired, are done and packed up in a box; tell me how I must send them. The confusion about the ministry is not yet settled; at least it was not at noon to-day; but, for fear that confusion should ever finish, all the three factions are likely to come into place together. Poor Mr. Chute has had another bad fit; he took the air yesterday for the first time. I came to town but last night, and return to my *chateau* this evening, knowing nothing but that we are on the crisis of battles and ministries.

Adieu!

P. S. I just hear that your cousin Halifax has resigned, on Pitt's not letting him be secretary of state for the West Indies.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Strawberry-hill, July 12, 1756.

WHEN I have told you that Mr. Müntz has finished the drapery of your picture, and the copy of it, and asked you whither and how they must be sent, I think I have done all the business of my letter; except telling you, that if you think of conveying them through Moreland, he is gone a soldiering. All the world is going the same road, except Mr. Müntz, who had rather be knocked of the head for fame, than paint for it. He goes to-morrow to Kingston, to see the great drum pass by to Cobham, as women go to take a last look of their captains. The duke of Marlborough and his grandfather's triumphal car are to close the procession. What would his grandame, if she were alive, say to this pageant? if the war lasts, I think well enough of him to believe he will earn a sprig; but I have no passion for trying on a crown of laurel, before I had acquired it. The French are said to be embarked at Dunkirk — lest I should seem to know more than any minister, I will not pretend to guess whither they are bound. I have been but one night in town, and my head sung ballads about admiral Byng all night, as one is apt to dream of the masquerade minuet: the sheets swarm so with lampoons, that I began to fancy myself a minister's son again.

I am going to-morrow to Park-place; and the first week in August into Yorkshire. If I hear that you are at Greatworth, that is, if you will disclose your motions to me for the first fortnight of that month, I will try if I cannot make it in my road either going or coming. I know nothing of roads, but lord Strafford is to send me a route, and I should be glad to ask you how you do for one night—but don't expect me, don't be disappointed about me, and of all things don't let so uncertain a scheme derange the least thing in the world that you have to do.

There are going to be as many camps and little armies, as when England was a heptarchy. Adieu.

Yours faithfully.

END OF VOL. I.

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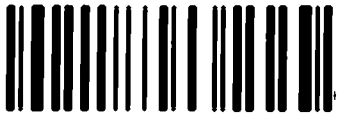
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